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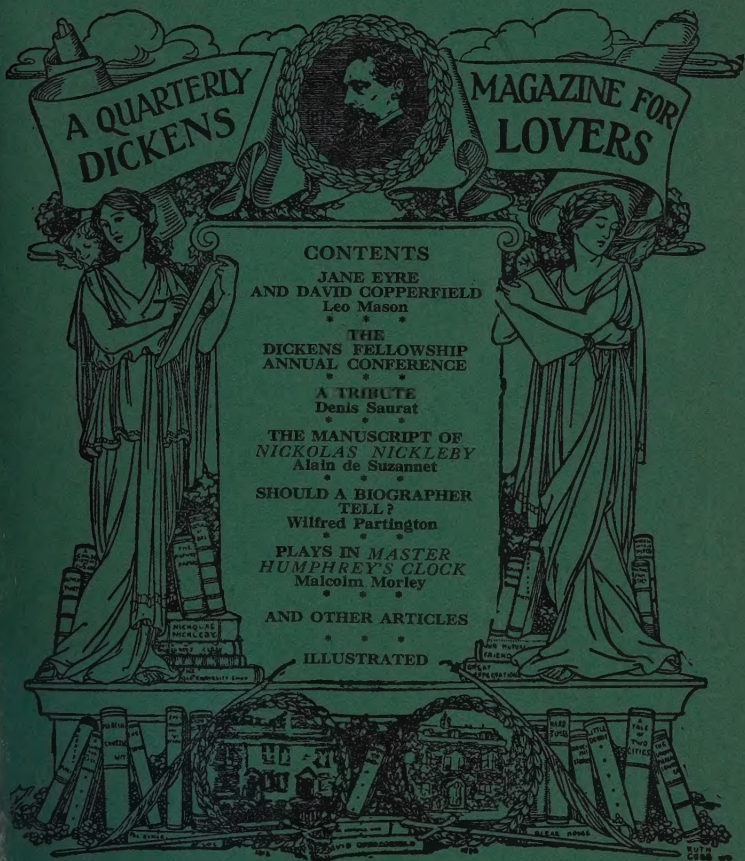

CONTENTS

JANE EYRE AND DAVID COPPERFIELD
Leo Mason

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A TRIBUTE
Denis Saurat

THE MANUSCRIPT OF *NICKOLAS NICKLEBY*
Alain de Suzanmet

SHOULD A BIOGRAPHER TELL?
Wilfred Partington

PLAYS IN *MASTER HUMPHREY'S CLOCK*
Malcolm Morley

AND OTHER ARTICLES

ILLUSTRATED

EDITED BY LESLIE C. STAPLES

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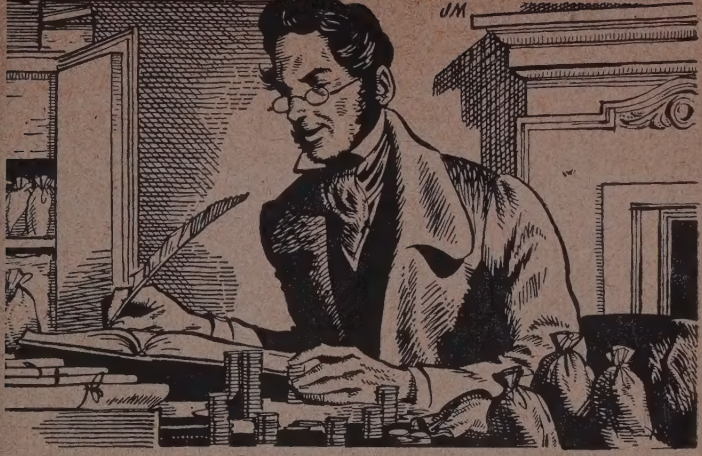


THE LONDON BANKER

The squeaking of a quill pen . . . spluttering radiance of the newly-invented gas-light . . . the soft, heavy clink of gold coinage . . . from outside, the clatter of hooves on a cobbled street . . . *an office of the London and Westminster Bank in the 1830's.*

THE TEMPO of business was slower, in an age which knew neither telephones nor typewriters—when the invitation to enjoy the 'hospitality of the Manager' was the normal conclusion to a successful transaction. These early days in the Bank's history now seem incredibly remote. Yet throughout the intervening years, which brought greater changes than did those of any previous century, the policy of the Westminster Bank has marched with the times; it aims to provide a complete banking service, based on the highest traditions of integrity and fair dealing.

WESTMINSTER BANK LIMITED

A Scene from *Master Humphrey's Clock*
as produced at the Victoria Theatre in May, 1840.

Reproduced from Dicks's Standard Plays.

See page 202.

THE DICKENSIAN

AUTUMN NUMBER

VOL. XLIII. 1st SEPTEMBER, 1947 No. 284

WHEN FOUND—

A Valuable Gift. It is pleasant to be able to record yet another very valuable gift to The Dickens House. It is a copy of the privately-printed *Sikes and Nancy*, prepared by Dickens for his use at his celebrated Readings. It is not known how many copies were printed, certainly very few indeed. Apart from the annotated copy he used on the platform, he presented some to friends, and only three or four are known to survive. This copy, imperfect as it lacks the title page, is a thin volume of 47 pages bound in wrappers, and it is stated to have been given by Mamie Dickens to John Billington. We owe this very rare addition to the library of The Dickens House to the generosity of Mr. George W. Morrow, the well-known *Punch* artist. Dickens's own copy, used on his Reading Tours, was subsequently given by him to Miss Billington from whom it passed to John Hollingshead and thence to Irving. It is now in the library of Count de Suzannet.

* * * * *

Dickens—Pancrasian. With the purpose of fostering and developing the many literary and artistic associations and activities within its boundaries, *The St. Pancras Journal* has been launched by the Borough Council. Edited by the enterprising Borough Librarian, Mr. Frederick Sinclair, it is most attractively written and produced. In each monthly number appear informative articles, written by Mr. Sinclair, on famous people who have worked in St. Pancras. The first of these, dealing with Bernard Shaw, appeared in the May issue and a third on Ellen Terry in July. The second is devoted to Dickens. It is not generally recognised that so much of the novelist's life was spent in the borough. All his early Camden Town homes, his mother's abortive seminary in Gower Street, Doughty Street and Tavistock Square were all within its boundaries. These places as well as other Dickensian associations with St. Pancras are dealt with by Mr. Sinclair. There is one slip which has several times been repeated. The description of the dreadful conditions of Agar Town which appeared in *Household Words* (March 8th, 1851) under the title of "A Suburban Connemara" was not from Dickens's pen but from that of J. M. Thomas.

* * * * *

Tavistock Square. The site of this St. Pancras home of Dickens has been prominently in the news of late. The Council of the British Medical Association has presented to its American counterpart a gavel and block bearing the following inscription:

TO THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION ON THE OCCASION OF ITS CENTENARY
AS A TOKEN OF GOOD WILL FROM THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
THIS GAVEL AND BLOCK MADE FROM THE MULBERRY TREE
WHICH GREW
IN THE GARDEN OF CHARLES DICKENS'S HOME IN LONDON
WHERE THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE NOW STANDS
JUNE, 1947

Another particularly happy gesture of Anglo-American friendship.

The Oxford Dickens. The keenly awaited new Oxford Edition of Dickens will begin to appear in the near future. *Pickwick*, with an introduction by Bernard Darwin, will be followed by *Bleak House*, *David Copperfield* and *Nicholas Nickleby*, with introductions by Sir Osbert Sitwell, the Very Rev. R. H. Malden, Dean of Wells, and Dame Sybil Thorndike respectively. Great pains have been expended upon the restoration of the freshness of the original illustrations.

* * * * *

A Dickens Jubilee. That pioneer of Dickens character studies on the stage, Mr. Bransby Williams, has been celebrating his jubilee in that sphere, which he has made so peculiarly his own, by touring in a new dramatic adaptation of *Great Expectations* by William Deneen and Michael Sherwin. Mr. Williams makes a deep impression with Magwitch and it is a delight to his hosts of admirers to find that the years have in no way impaired his powers. It cannot be claimed that he was aided by the adaptation, which is not a good one, but he is ably supported by the Miss Havisham of Christine Silver. Mr. Williams easily dominated the house on the evening on which we saw the production at Hammersmith. Our congratulations and good wishes are offered in full measure to the still youthful veteran.

* * * * *

Overseas Visitors. A very happy feature of this summer has been the arrival in London of advance numbers of what it is hoped will be an ever-increasing flow of visitors from overseas branches. Only one was able to attend Conference, Miss Gladys Monger, of Boston, Mass., who was afforded a rousing welcome by the other delegates. Then followed in quick succession Mrs. M. I. Shaw, of Christchurch, New Zealand; Mrs. Eunice Griffiths, of the California Pickwick Club; and Mr. G. Lister of Toronto. Another Toronto visitor we hoped to greet in London was Dr. J. M. B. Armour, but unfortunately indisposition detained him in Northern Ireland. Later there arrived Mr. Justice Sidney Smith and Mrs. F. Worboys, of Vancouver, and Miss J. Workman and Miss H. M. Workman, of East Bay, Cal. Although these visitors had little time to spare in London, it was a great pleasure to meet them and show them all that was possible of Dickens's London within the limit of their stay. But they all paid visits to The Dickens House and expressed themselves delighted with the ever-growing collections displayed there, and, above all, that it so successfully survived the air raids of the recent war.

* * * * *

Penny Plain . . . Mr. George Speaight has written about some confusion in the information we sought from him on the subject of the Juvenile Drama for the article which appeared in the last number (p. 152). It is clear that the youthful Dickens may have used a published version of *Cherry and Fair Star*, as one was issued by Hodgson and another by Marks, both of whom commenced publishing in 1822.

* * * * *

In the Sale Room. Two interesting items were sold at Sotheby's in June. The first was a copy of Wilkie Collins's privately-printed play, *The Frozen Deep*, with numerous corrections in the author's handwriting. The second was a page of the MS. of *Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings*, numbered "2."

* * * * *

Old London. A welcome must be accorded to our new contemporary, *Old London*, the first number of which has now made its bow. It is a bright little quarterly, well illustrated, dealing with the history, legends and associations of the metropolis. Feminine fashions of the past also receive attention and a coloured reproduction

of a Victorian fashion-plate is presented with No. 1. Contributors include such well-known names as James Laver, William Kent and Herbert Morrison.

* * * * *

The Fund. It is gratifying to be able to record that the summer has seen no respite in the efforts of well-wishers to swell the total of The Dickens House Endowment Fund (Walter Dexter Memorial). The report of Conference on another page shows that the figure of £3,000 was reached at that event in May. Since that date, it has become £3,136, a sum which prompts us to hope that a total will soon be attained that will begin to yield a useful income. The aid of yet more branches is sought before our object is achieved. A special word of praise and encouragement is deserved by contributors in New Zealand. Undeterred by the heavy adverse rate of exchange, the Christchurch branch raised £21 for the fund, but alas, by the time it had been transmitted to England it had shrunk to £16 16*s.* 0*d.* Thank you, Christchurch.

* * * * *

Dickens and Southwark. Visitors to Conference who attended the beautiful Dickens Commemorative Service in Southwark Cathedral on the Sunday evening, will rejoice to learn that the Provost, the Very Rev. C. K. N. Bardsley, has provided that this shall be an annual event at the Cathedral. Next year the Service will be held on Sunday, February 8th, the day after Dickens's birthday. This welcome news was received too late to be included in the season's programme which is to be circulated to members, but full details will appear in *The Dickensian* for December.

* * * * *

Dickens's Baptism. The ceremony of the baptism of Charles Dickens took place in the church of St. Mary's, Kingston, Portsea. This church was demolished about fifty years ago ahd Kitton recorded that the font was not re-erected in the new church but was removed and set up at St. Stephen's, Portsea. It is now at St. Alban's Church, Copnor, not far away. Although this building was sadly damaged in the recent war, and the elaborate modern front-cover was destroyed, the font itself is unharmed.

* * * * *

Watts's Charity. Since we commented in our last issue on the closing of this historic house to the "poor travellers" for whom it was designed, we have gleaned further details. These have not been easily arrived at for the Trustees have been slow indeed to answer protests in the press and the local press, who although allowing the courtesy of their columns to some of these criticisms, have refrained from any expression of opinion. Indeed it would appear that no one in the city of Rochester is sufficiently interested in this ruthless piece of iconoclasm to raise a voice, of either praise or blame, in connection with the action of the Trustees. Advised that the latter could not take their proposed action without an Order of the Court, we have discovered that such an Order was secured by the Trustees as long ago as 1886. Under this they are surprisingly, and disastrously, at full liberty to close the house to "poor travellers," merely requiring the sanction of the Charity Commissioners to devote the building to other purposes. The Council of the Dickens Fellowship thereupon sent its formal protest to the Trustees, which, while recognising that every effort is being made to preserve the building and its fittings for exhibition purposes as hitherto, deplores their action which, in our view, can only be interpreted as a most reprehensible departure from the wishes of the benefactor.

LESLIE C. STAPLES.

JANE EYRE AND *DAVID COPPERFIELD*

By LEO MASON

I

IN the Summer number of *The Dickensian* a line of thought was pursued in which it was suggested that Dickens and Charlotte Brontë had each brought an influence to bear on the other's writings. Having in mind what has already been said concerning the first half of the story of *Jane Eyre*, the reader's thoughts are now directed towards the book which by general consent is considered to be Dickens's best and most popular novel—"The Personal History, Adventures, Experience and Observation Of David Copperfield, The Younger Of Blunderstone Rookery (Which He Never Meant To Be Published On Any Account)."

II

In a similar manner to *Jane Eyre*, the first part of *David Copperfield* portrays the life of a young child—this time a boy. As with Charlotte Brontë so also with Dickens. He looked back upon his early trials and sorrows with indignation; he, too, felt that he had suffered injustice at the hands of those about him and his imagination, fired by his genius, combining fact with fiction, produced his masterpiece. David, like Jane, at the age of ten years enters into a period of hardship; Dickens remembers incidents of his childhood and works them into his narrative and, like Charlotte Brontë, he does not create the impression that he is describing a child, but the reader feels that it is the child itself who is appealing and speaking to him. The incidents, scenes and characters are thus presented with a greater intensity and vividness than they would normally appear when seen through the eyes of an adult.

Although autobiographic in form, the stories of *Jane Eyre* and *David Copperfield* are, in the main, works of imagination and not literal translations from the lives of the authors, but as Forster points out, "To be acquainted with English Literature is to know that into its most famous prose fiction autobiography has entered largely in disguise, and that the characters most familiar to us in the English novel had originals in actual life." Dickens did not often dramatise himself in his character creations, but in all her writings Charlotte Brontë projects something of her own personality into all her heroines. In *David Copperfield*, however, Dickens for the first time dramatises himself, as Charlotte Brontë does in *Jane Eyre*, and thus both authors have succeeded in nourishing their wholly imaginative stories with the realities of life, while achieving their true mark as novelists in revealing the glorification and fulfilment of the day-dreams of common men and women. Their resultant work, although larger than life, is presented however with such narrative power that the characters, scenes and situations, which the reader knows never existed, are so portrayed that their actuality is never brought into question. Apart from the manner in which they are told the two stories have certain things in common: the sense of loneliness, the want of love, the mental anguish suffered by David; the bullying of his step-father, the solitary confinement in his room, the way he was got rid of by being sent away to school and the false impression of his character given to the schoolmaster; the manner in which he was pilloried before the other boys by being compelled to wear a notice on his back which warned everyone to "Take care of him, he bites," and the friendly gesture of Tommy Traddles, who himself was always getting into trouble; these things

all have their counterparts in *Jane Eyre*. Mr. Murdstone, like Mr. Brocklehurst, an ominous figure in black, is described as a man without a single redeeming feature. David's interviews with him recall Jane's interviews with Aunt Reed and Mr. Brocklehurst—the picture of a child confronted with an insurmountable obstacle. The kindness and fellow-feeling of little Tommy Traddles is reminiscent of that displayed by little Helen Burns. Perhaps it may be objected that in comparing the work of Dickens with that of Charlotte Brontë, the comparisons are drawn the wrong way round, but it must be remembered that *Jane Eyre* appeared in October, 1847, and it was not until the month of May, 1849, that the first monthly part of *David Copperfield* appeared.

III

In view of the foregoing it is rather interesting to note that Charlotte Brontë's publishers were apparently struck by a certain similarity between the earlier portions of the two books and pointed this out to her, because she says in reply: "I have read *David Copperfield*; it seems to me very good—admirable in some parts. You said it had affinity to *Jane Eyre*. It has now and then—only what an advantage has Dickens in his varied knowledge of men and things!" In saying this Charlotte testified to her own good judgment of her powers as a novelist, and her assessment of her talents was on a somewhat lower plane than that ascribed to them by Lockhart of the Quarterly Review, who thought the author of *Jane Eyre* to be "far the cleverest that has written since Austen and Edgeworth were in their prime, worth fifty Trollopes (Frances) and Martineaus rolled into one counterpane with fifty Dickenses and Bulwers to keep them company." Charlotte Brontë knew her limitations, her range was much narrower than that of Dickens; she did not possess his wide knowledge of men and things. Unlike him, she was not able to create a character by sheer force of imagination, but was dependent upon some actual subject or personage which her imagination could enlarge upon. Dickens was an objective writer, he could present his men and women quite impartially, she was a subjective writer, the centre of all her writings, and everything was therefore portrayed as seen through her own eyes, as it effected her; as she in her imagination wished it or thought it to be. Her world, for she too, like Dickens, created a world, the world of Brontëland, was a much smaller one than his, but what it lacked in broad expanse it gained in depth—in depth of feeling. Any affinity between *Jane Eyre* and *David Copperfield*, whether it be in the similarity of theme, the style of writing, or the manner of presentation, would not in itself have marked Charlotte Brontë's story as being the work of original genius; it would have been viewed as the work of a writer of the second class: of a disciple of the older and admittedly greater genius.

IV

What then was Charlotte Brontë's own especial contribution to the English Novel? Dickens is recognised as the great delineator of the teeming masses, as the exposer of humbug and hypocrisy, the champion of kindliness. Mankind was his business, the common welfare, and he dealt in charity, mercy, peace and benevolence. He is distinguished by his humorous and pathetic portrayal of life; he had an influence on his age and is remembered and often quoted as a spirited protagonist in the sphere of social reform. Much that he wrote about was beyond the scope and ken of Charlotte Brontë, and the one thing she wrote about was a forbidden subject to Dickens until she, in her story of *Jane Eyre*, had brought an influence to bear upon the outlook of her day; an influence which was something new in the pages of the

English Novel and of universal significance, which had its effect on the later writings of Dickens.

The deep-seated passion of love is the prevailing note of all her works just as the love of humanity is the dominant note in the works of Dickens. The love she wrote about was the love of a man for a woman and more particularly, the love of a woman for a man. She portrayed it as such and not as the sexless overflow of affectionate regard portrayed by the earlier Dickens. "I think of calling my next Christmas Story," wrote Dickens to Forster. "*The Battle of Life*—a love story—to express both a love story in the common acceptation of the phrase, and also a story of love." Some comments on this story by a critic writing in the *North British Review* are not without interest. "The battle of Life ! It was a noble title suggestive of high thoughts. We looked for a picture of some lofty nature sorely tried—placed struggling between temptation and duty, between passion and principle, between the promptings of selfishness and the whispers of self-sacrificing love. And we longed to see a battle such as this fought out in the glowing page, as many such are fought and won unrecorded in daily life. Instead of this what have we ? Our pen refuses the task of analysis. We have first a description of a real field of battle—very prettily drawn, then enter a father and two daughters—then the affianced lover of the younger—a parting—mysterious innuendoes—at last, on the day of his return, she elopes with a stranger—misery—mystery—her betrothed marries her sister—finally, she re-appears, not lost or dishonoured ; and lo ! it was no elopement at all ; but thinking in her wisdom that her sister loved him, she had vanished to break his tie to her, that that sister might fill her place ! And this is *The Battle of Life*! This is a love story ! Were ever noble titles worse profaned ? Did ever book issue from an eminent writer's pen more fatal to his claims to the character of a master in his art ?" The foregoing critique was written early in the year 1847. *Jane Eyre* was published a few months afterwards.

V

In the second part of the story Jane becomes a governess at Thornfield Hall and experiences many thrilling and mysterious adventures. She becomes well acquainted with the master of the Hall, Edward Fairfax Rochester, a not uncouth but very brusque-mannered gentleman of forty, a bachelor it seems, who according to Jane had "broad and jetty eyebrows, a square forehead, made squarer by the horizontal sweep of his black hair. He had a decisive nose, more remarkable for character than beauty ; a grim mouth, chin and jaw—yes, all three were very grim and no mistake." "His shape," says Jane, "harmonised in squareness with his physiognomy ; I suppose it was a good figure in the athletic sense of the term—broad chested and thin-flanked, though neither tall nor graceful." As the story progresses through all sorts of melodramatic events the reader nevertheless follows step by step the growth and swell of passion as Jane and Rochester fall deeper and deeper in love. Perhaps it is more precise to say that he watches Jane fall in love with Rochester ! She saves him from being burned to death. She loves him dearly. When she learns that Rochester is about to marry a beautiful society girl named Blanche Ingram she suffers great anguish of heart and mind. The day of the proposed wedding draws nigh and Jane steels herself for the separation from the man she loves. She tells him that she must leave Thornfield Hall. "I grieve to leave Thornfield ; I love Thornfield—I love it because I have lived in it a full and delightful life—I have not been trampled on. I have not been petrified." And then follows one of Charlotte Brontë's original utterances in literature

—an utterance which caused a considerable stir in certain Victorian circles: "I have known you, Mr. Rochester," says Jane, "and it strikes me with terror and anguish to feel I absolutely must be torn from you for ever. I see the need for departure; and it is like looking on the necessity of death." But Rochester has no intention of letting her go because he had discovered the worthlessness of Blanche and the sterling quality of Jane, whom he hopes to make his wife, and says that he does not agree that she should go. Jane, who does not know of his changed intentions cries, "I tell you I must go. Do you think I can stay and become nothing to you? Do you think I am an automaton? A machine without feelings? And can bear to have my morsel of bread snatched from my lips, and my drop of living water dashed from my cup? Do you think because I am poor, obscure, plain and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong! I have as much soul as you—and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you. I am not talking to you now through the medium of custom, conventionalities, nor even of mortal flesh—it is my spirit that addresses your spirit, just as if both had passed through the grave and we stood at God's feet equal—as we are!" And continuing her narrative Jane records: "Rochester enclosed me within his arms, gathered me to his breast, pressing his lips on my lips."

Such wholesale debunking of the carefully built-up standards of feminine decorum and the "impossible" shattering of the inviolable conventions caused many to brand the story as being immoral and to become convinced that the author who wrote under the name of Currer Bell must indeed be a man. Charlotte Brontë was quite unconscious that the book possessed a reputation of that sort until she was surprised and affronted on reading in the *Quarterly Review* (December, 1848), that "if *Jane Eyre* were written by a woman it must be by one who had forfeited the right to the society of her sex."

Preparations are made for the wedding of Jane and Rochester—nothing is too good for Jane—she is supremely happy—the day arrives—they are about to be pronounced man and wife—when there is an impediment—Rochester has a wife, a raving lunatic, who lives at the top of Thornfield Hall. He had deceived the only woman of some few in his life that he had really loved. In a passionate scene between Jane and Rochester, he begs her not to leave him, but to live with him as his mistress in some foreign land. Jane, torn between her love for Rochester on the one hand and the promptings of conscience on the other, contends now with, now against, the opposing forces of good and evil. She fights the good fight. Because she loves him she forgives him all, but—she leaves him and departs from Thornfield Hall. Time passes by and Jane experiences more sorrows and adventures. Rochester's mad wife, whom it appears had been a debauched woman before he, as a young man, had been tricked into marrying her, sets fire to Thornfield Hall. In trying to save her from destruction, Rochester is blinded and maimed about the hand and arm. She flings herself to death from the roof of the building. Rochester, one evening when seated at his open window, cries out in his despair, "Jane! Jane!" His words are carried on the breeze and the reader is given to understand that Jane, afar off, hears his call. Now an independent woman, having come into a legacy, she travels back to him—finds him blind and helpless—she loves him dearly—there are no obstacles now. "I will be your neighbour, your nurse, your housekeeper. I find you lonely," cries Jane, "I will be your companion—to read to you, to walk with you, to sit with you, to wait on you, to be 'eyes and hands' to you," and because she loves him and

knows that he loves her, in her own way she encourages him to say what he in his battered state did not now think it fair to utter. "Jane, will you marry me?" and she replies, "To be your wife is, for me, to be as happy as I can be on earth." They are two beings transformed by true love, and Jane continues, "Then he stretched his hand out to be led. I took that dear hand, then let it pass round my shoulder; being so much lower in stature than he, I served both for his prop and guide. We entered the wood and wended homeward."

So ends this powerful, sensational, dynamic story of the little girl at Lowood School, who so much wanted to love and be loved. It has only been possible to outline the general trend of the story—a story which truly merits the title of *The Battle of Life: A Love Story*, to express in Dickens's words "both a love story in the common acceptance of the phrase, and also a story of love"—a story in which the critic would find what he did not find in Dickens's story—"a picture of some lofty nature sorely tried, placed struggling between temptation and duty, between passion and principle, between the promptings of selfishness and the whispers of self-sacrificing love." It is a battle such as this that Charlotte Brontë stages in the autobiography of Jane Eyre.

VI

According to contemporary descriptions, Charlotte Brontë was an extremely plain, insignificant-looking little woman with a passionate soul and was bitterly conscious of her lack of physical charm. Inwardly, she deeply resented the numerous restrictions and conventions which were imposed upon the women of her day and more than any other writer of the first-class she used her fictitious stories mainly to express her own personality. In doing so she expressed not only her own pent-up longings and desires, but also those of a great cross-section of womankind; she desired freedom of action, of thought, her independence, she saw through the shams of the age. She wanted things called by their proper names. She wished to come out of the prison-house of Victorian conventions and take her chance in the world, just as Jane Eyre longed to escape beyond the confines of Lowood School. "I know that if women wish to escape the stigma of husband-seeking," wrote Charlotte, "they must act and look like marble or clay—cold, expressionless, bloodless; for every appearance of feeling, of joy, of sorrow, of friendliness, antipathy, admiration, disgust, are alike construed by the world into the attempt to hook a husband."

Such were the conventions. Charles Dickens was very careful to observe them in his novels which he purposefully designed so that they should be read aloud in the family circles of Victorian homes. His young ladies were therefore always of the sweet, innocent and angelic type, perfectly in accord with the conventions and, as Charlotte points out, were therefore of necessity completely passive. She did not think much of them and speaking her thoughts through the mouth of Shirley, she says: "Men's good woman is a queer thing, half doll, half angel, their bad woman almost a fiend. Then to hear them fall into ecstasies with each other's creations worshipping the heroine of such a poem—novel—drama, thinking it fine—divine! If I spoke all I think on this point, if I gave my real opinion of some first-rate female character in first-rate works, where should I be? Dead under a cairn of avenging stones in half an hour. Women read men more truly than men read women." "I will show you a heroine as plain and as small as myself," cried Charlotte, and looking inwardly she described what lay hidden deep in the human heart of the plain insignificant-looking Jane Eyre. She thus introduced a new kind of heroine into fiction, a creature of

desires and passions, which make her very human, but as in the case of Jane Eyre, a creature who also possesses a firmness of soul which makes her sublime.

VII

In the main Dickens's heroines display an excellence flowing from constitution and temperament and not because they are influenced by moral or religious motives. They are not beset by contending passions and therefore do not experience the force of temptation which in life is the common lot of human nature. They cannot, therefore, be viewed as complete human beings but only as fictitious idealisations of what may be termed "the simple heart." This is what Anthony Trollope meant when he wrote: "Dickens's young ladies lack nature, they crowd upon our memory, not as shadows of people we have really known, like Jane Eyre—but they have affected us as personifications of tenderness and gentle feminine gifts."

Although such portraits are not entirely devoid of merit they are nevertheless rather uninteresting to the adult reader who, knowing that virtue is its own reward, is also aware that it is therefore only entitled to be extolled when achieved by the triumph of good principle over evil propensity, or by the negation of self in the doing or bringing about of something good. It is not surprising that Charlotte Brontë showed interest in Esther Summerson—to some extent a governess employed by a middle-aged man—a slight shadow to the same idea in *Jane Eyre*. Does the reader not sense as he reads *Bleak House* that Dickens had some idea of building up a romance between the originally lonely and friendless girl and her unselfish "guardian" John Jarndyce? Does he not have a feeling of anticlimax when Dickens most inartistically transfers her affections and eventually marries her to "her cardboard lover," Allan Woodcourt? Charlotte Brontë soon formed her judgment of the story and more particularly of "the young lady who is always declaring that she is not 'bright'." She expressed the view that she liked the chancery parts, but the parts dealing with the autobiography of the heroine seemed to her "too often weak and twaddling and that an amiable nature is caricatured, not faithfully rendered, in Miss Esther Summerson." Dickens, of course, wished his heroine to appear as a model of unconscious goodness, creating an atmosphere of happiness and loving kindness wherever she went and reaping in return fond feelings of affection from all whom she encountered. But, like Charlotte Brontë, the discriminating reader observes that her "humility" of disposition is so profound that she never allows an opportunity to pass without drawing attention to her admirable qualities. She records all the praises that are showered upon her and asserts the sweetness of her nature with emphasis. This cannot be said to be a true portrait of the type of girl Dickens had in mind, because he caricatured his "personification of tenderness and gentle feminine gifts." Such a perfect being would be too modest to write her own memoirs and most certainly she would not extol her own personal goodness.

VIII

Some writers rather stress the view that Dickens was wholly in the dark about female psychology until he had met Ellen Ternan, whom they say taught him something real about women, and as a consequence his later heroines are a great improvement on his earlier ones. On the other hand, Charlotte Brontë's publishers criticised her heroes and she herself commented: "In delineating male characters I labour under disadvantages, intuition and theory will not always adequately supply the place of observation and experience. When I write about women I am sure of my ground—in the other case, I am not so sure."

Dickens, however, unlike Charlotte Brontë, was an individual who from his earliest years had touched life at many points, he had a wide experience of human nature –he was a man of the world. It would appear nonsensical to say that he really believed that the guileless unimpassioned creatures he presented in his novels truly reflected the young women of his day. It is more reasonable to suppose that it was because of his close adherence to conventional thought that he confined himself to depicting "personifications of gentle feminine gifts" and did not essay to portray his heroines as active practical human beings, like Jane Eyre, made up of the common conflicting elements of human nature, because the spirit of the times did not consider the triumph of virtue a proper subject to be discussed before Victorian youths and maidens. It was feared that the more sensational and "attractive" disclosures in the story might put ideas into their heads and lead them into wrongdoing. Charlotte Brontë, writing from the heart, ignored the conventions and eventually her writings had an influence on the age. "Her passion swept over the pools of Early Victorian fiction and roused them to a storm," wrote Edmund Gosse. "The undulations that it set in motion have been vibrating in our literature ever since, she was crude at times, though her poetic fancy was without a rival and now, in spite of all imperfections, her work will live for ever in the forefront of creative English genius."

When Dickens began to write he thought it wise to express the hope, in the preface to *The Pickwick Papers*, "that throughout this book no incident or expression occurs which could call a blush into the most delicate cheek or wound the feelings of the most sensitive person." As Mr. Podsnap luxuriates himself in the pages of *Our Mutual Friend*, his one great concern is contained in his oft repeated phrase, "The question about everything is, will it bring a blush into the cheek of the young person." Between the beginning and the end of Dickens's works the times and trends of thought materially changed. Women took up the cry of Charlotte Brontë, they became more openly active, they proved that they could take the initiative and claimed the recognition of a greater measure of independence. Dickens, advancing with the times, through Podsnap and his daughter Georgiana, makes sport of the disappearing conventions and in the story of Lizzie Hexam, Eugene Wrayburn and Bradley Headstone, he tells a love story "to express both a love story in the common acceptation of the phrase, and also a story of love." It is a tale of passion—the love of man for woman—the love of a woman for a man—for a man who thought to induce her to become his mistress ! Because she loves him, Lizzie, like Jane, forgives him, but—she leaves him. Like Rochester, Eugene is maimed, helpless—a broken man. Like Jane, Lizzie hears his cry —she hurries to his side—there is no obstacle to true love—"I will be your nurse . . . I find you lonely . . . I will be your companion . . . to sit with you . . . to wait on you, to be eyes and hands to you." "Lizzie, will you marry me," says Eugene, and, like Jane, she becomes as happy as she can be on earth. Dickens, like Charlotte Brontë, tells a tale of the triumph of virtue –the triumph of true love ! But . . .

IX

In placing the foregoing facts and associations of ideas concerning Dickens and Charlotte Brontë before the reader, it should also be pointed out that Charlotte did not bestow her highest praise on Dickens, but for some unaccountable reason literally adored William Makepeace Thackeray, to whom she dedicated the second edition of *Jane Eyre*. She purported to see in him an intellect "profound" and "unique" and regarded him as "the first social regenerator of the day, and the very master of that working corps who would restore

to rectitude the warped system of things." Charlotte met Thackeray on some few occasions and corresponded with him. but there is no evidence to prove that she ever even caught a glimpse of Dickens. A writer, named F. Storrs-Smith, in the *Free Lance Journal* for March, 1868, describing a visit he apparently paid to Charlotte Brontë in the year 1850, records that in the course of conversation with her he learned that, "Dickens she had met, and admired his genius, but did not like him. Her homely thrift and unpretending retiring nature shrunk from him, from an idea she had acquired of ostentatious extravagance on his part." Whatever her opinions of Dickens may have been, the foregoing statement cannot be considered reliable when coupled with a statement made by Charlotte in a letter written in the year 1852, in which she says of a recent visit to London: "It was proposed to me to see Charles Dickens and some others, but I was aware these introductions would bring a degree of notoriety I was not disposed to encounter. I declined, therefore, with thanks. . . . I twice saw Macready act—once in 'Macbeth' and once in 'Othello.' . . . It is the fashion to rave about his splendid acting. Anything more false and artificial, less genuinely impressive than his whole style I could scarcely have imagined." These are very different opinions from those held by Dickens.

Perhaps some readers may hold different opinions from those put forward by the present writer concerning Dickens and Charlotte Brontë, but it has been his aim to commemmorate the centenary year of *Jane Eyre* and to record a slight tribute to its author in the pages of "David Copperfield's Magazine."

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. Editor,

May I claim the hospitality of your columns to convey to the Council and Members of the Dickens Fellowship in Conference my warmest thanks for the exquisite memento of my term of office as Treasurer. It was so unexpected, especially as the Council had in January given me the high honour of Life Membership, and your own eloquent tribute was so cordially received by Conference that I was utterly confused and could only murmur a few stumbling sentences (in all probability mostly unheard) in reply.

I therefore take this opportunity of expressing my deep sense of the affection that has always been extended to me by all: by my colleagues on the Council, by my co-Trustees of the Dickens House and by every Member with whom I have been brought into contact. This attachment between us will not be broken by the "handing-in of my seal of office," and the tangible form of their regard with its handsome inscription has become one of my most valued possessions. Its value is enhanced because it is so personal to me, and has "no damned merit about it" as Lord Melbourne said of the Garter, but is, I feel, an expression, as the inscription says, of "affection and esteem."

I look back on the past fifteen years—and more—with the liveliest memories of happy and intimate friendships formed and consolidated, and I look forward with the keenest and most pleasurable anticipation to a continuance of that close association in work for the Fellowship.

Yours faithfully,

Bromley, Kent. T. W. Hill.

THE FORTY-FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

MAY 16th last saw once again the joyous reassembling of delegates from Branches of the Dickens Fellowship from all over Britain for this annual reunion and festival. It would be difficult to calculate the resultant benefit to the society as a whole. Old friendships are renewed, new ones founded. Our essential unity is emphasised and our aims and ideals made apparent and co-ordinated. Once again London was the scene, for no branch sufficiently strong to invite Conference, had yet, since the war, found itself in command of adequate hotel accommodation.

OPENING DRAMATIC PRODUCTION

The programme opened with a performance of *A Tale of Two Cities* under the direction of Mrs. Jane Bacon, at the Victoria Hall, Bloomsbury Square, a handsome building erected a few years before the war on the site of the town house of Lord Mansfield, the sacking of which is described in *Barnaby Rudge*. The production, which is reviewed in detail on p. 213, was enjoyed by a large audience and resulted in a profit, to be devoted to the Dickens House Endowment Fund, of £63 4*s*. 10*d*. After the performance an informal reception was held, at which refreshments were served and the social side of the Conference began in earnest.

THE BUSINESS MEETING

On Saturday morning the members assembled at Lincoln's Inn Old Hall for the Business Meeting, which was opened by the Chairman of the Council, Mr. Leslie C. Staples, with an address. Taking his cue from the beautiful and historic hall in which the meeting was assembled (Jarndyce *v.* Jarndyce took place within its walls), Mr. Staples endeavoured to paint a picture of Dickens's London, consisting of passages culled from the novels.

After the roll-call of branches had been completed, which revealed a highly representative attendance, and after other preliminary business had been despatched, the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Percy Merriman, read :

THE REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

Once more The Dickens Fellowship sails into calmer waters. There is still, however, no little austerity and for the country it is Hard Times and Bleak House with few Great Expectations. But the Fellowship and its Branches nobly withstood the recent arctic rigours and can take austerity in its stride, though we sorely need more settled times. It was unfortunate, however, that the worst weather in living memory should fall upon us at a time when we were beginning to feel our feet again. Headquarters and Branches had arranged programmes of pre-war interestand vitality and the meetings were duly carried through although attendances were naturally affected.

As mentioned in the last Conference report, two films from Dickens have been produced and generally released—*Great Expectations* and *Nicholas Nickleby*. The press was practically unanimous in its praise for the former and as through the invaluable efforts of Mr. Leslie C. Staples, a share in the proceeds of the première, amounting to £1,300, was handed to the Walter Dexter Memorial Fund, the Fellowship may well be proud of the result in both senses. No such good fortune followed the appearance of *Nickleby*, but Mr. Staples will, we know, accept our warmest thanks for his grand efforts over *Great Expectations*. It is our earnest hope that both films will do well. *Oliver Twist* is at present on the stocks, so Dickens is much in the

air, as is evident by the continued interest in his books shown by the B.B.C., and the resultant publicity is much to our advantage.

The position of our Branches has been carefully considered by the Council during the year and the situation is :

1939—Home Branches 41, Overseas Branches 35, Total 76 ;
1947—Home Branches 34, Overseas Branches 33, Total 67 ;

showing a total loss of nine.

There are two others of which we are still doubtful—Eastbourne and Marion—and Woodville also seems at the moment precarious. Broadstairs, however, has been successfully re-launched. The Branches lost during the war years are Bedford, Brighton, Canterbury, Hackney, Lancaster, Wellingborough and Whitstable at home ; abroad : Canada—Hamilton ; America – Bethlehem and Hollywood ; and also our Danish Branch in Copenhagen. On the other hand two new Branches were formed during this period – Marion (now, alas, in question) and Maryville. The losses are most regrettable, but few similar societies would be likely to come unscathed through so trying a period. The hope of revival in many cases still lingers and the Fellowship will watch its various offspring with tender solicitude.

The Dickens House Endowment Fund (Walter Dexter Memorial) continues to make steady and welcome progress, but this matter will be handled in more detail by Mr. Leslie C. Staples.

During the year a laudable effort was made to correct an error concerning the tablet on the alleged honeymoon cottage at Chalk, but no success was achieved and it is likely that the wrong cottage will be spuriously honoured for some time yet. The wrong owner likes his tablet. (See p. 62).

Most interesting reports of meetings and copies of programmes have been received from Branches both at home and overseas and this clear evidence of old-time activity and enthusiasm has caused much satisfaction at The Dickens House and all the cordial greetings received have been warmly reciprocated.

Through the generosity of some of our Overseas Branches the work of the Fellowship has developed considerably in the way of general charitable activities and we think a little attention should be devoted to this side of our work, somewhat overshadowed perhaps by our unceasing efforts for The Dickens House Endowment Fund. In addition to the Cot maintained at Lord Mayor Treloar's Cripples Hospital and College and continued donations to the Royal Surgical Aid Society, The Reedham Orphanage, The National Children's Home and Orphanage, financial aid has been given in other directions as and when the need has come to our notice. More recently we have assisted the St. Margaret's House Mission which is doing such good work in Bethnal Green, St. Dunstan's for the Blind, and victims of the recent disastrous floods both *via* our Gloucester Branch and the Lord Mayor's Fund to which, through the generosity of Overseas Branches, we were able to send fifty guineas. Then during the whole of the past two years, through the good offices of Major Cousens, we have been able to help individual cases of distress amongst children in all parts of the country—children in homes or institutions, those still in billets under war evacuation schemes with no homes or parents to return to, others blitzed or orphaned. Every kind of assistance has been rendered from Christmas and birthday parcels, financial assistance for education, blankets, clothing, and all those little everyday needs such as pocket money, tooth paste, writing paper, etc. To give an idea of the type of case Major Cousens finds, here is the story of one child :

Rose Slingsby was discovered in the Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital suffering with T.B. She was friendless and neglected by her stepmother and brutal father. During the flying-bomb raids she was removed to Brentwood Convalescent Hospital where they kept her for nearly a year, during which time the child was kept supplied with parcels, books, sweets, etc. On discharge, she was sent home, but within two months both parents were before the Courts for ill-treating her. During the proceedings the Church Army took the child into one of their hostels, but later she was handed over to St. George's College, a charity school entirely dependent on grants and voluntary contributions. It is situated at Newnham-on-Severn and with financial help from the L.C.C. and The Dickens Fellowship, the child is in clean fresh air which she badly needs and is being well looked after and educated. A story, we think you will agree, after Dickens's own heart.

The March *Dickensian* records the continuance of the distribution of many bales of clothing sent to us by our fellow Dickensians and friends in Vancouver. Over 150 bales have been distributed in all parts of the country during the past few years. So—Charity may begin at home but it by no means ends there and it is gratifying thus to be able to live up to the aims and objects of the Fellowship.

The enforced increase in the cost of *The Dickensian* is much to be regretted, but it is a trend of the times and we owe a debt to the printers, Messrs. A. Brown & Sons Ltd., of Hull, for their generosity in making no increase in costs during the war. This, however, inevitably emphasised the ultimate increase. The special appeal to Branches to maintain and, more important, increase the circulation of our "Sea-Green Incorruptible" seems to be receiving ready support, but it is early yet to predict what will be the outcome of the first year's working on the new basis. One undoubted advantage will be for a far wider circle of readers to be attracted and in this we can, surely, count on the invaluable support of fellow Dickensians who can act as pioneers and blaze a trail for new readers.

We regret the loss of many well-known Branch members during the year, recorded quarterly in *The Dickensian*, but this, alas, is inevitable in so old established a Fellowship.

It is with pride that we record two further munificent gifts recently made to The Dickens House. Firstly, the Count de Suzannet has placed the Fellowship still further in his debt by the presentation of Dickens's Marriage Licence of 1836, and secondly, Mr. Arnold Nottage Palmer, of Newbury, has given an original page of the manuscript of *Oliver Twist*, which is a welcome companion piece to the pages of *Pickwick* and *Nickleby* already in the House. We are all deeply indebted for these magnificent additions.

And now the Conference for 1947 lies before us with all its opportunities for fraternal greetings and exchange of views and another season of activity for the Branches in general. In cordially greeting all the Branches here represented to-day, the council congratulate them warmly on the start they have made in the first real post-war season and wish them still wider success in the season that lies ahead. Austerity may sit at the table, but the Dickens glow will dispel any gloom.

The Financial Report by the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. E. J. Mitchell, followed. Again it was found to have been impossible for the Hon. Auditors to prepare the accounts in time for presentation to Conference, a state of affairs which, owing to the effects of the war, was likely to persist for some time. But Mr. Mitchell was able to give a very promising picture of the position. Clearly that position was excellent in view of the present circumstances, so soon after the conclusion of such a war. The audited Balance Sheets will appear in *The Dickensian* at the earliest possible moment. With rising costs and subscriptions, it is difficult, during this interim period, to judge the final results upon both the Dickens Fellowship and *The Dickensian*, whereas the position of the Dickens House depends largely upon the result of the present campaign to raise an adequate Endowment Fund. The accounts were passed "subject to audit."

The Dickens House Endowment Fund (Walter Dexter Memorial) was then dealt with by the Chairman, who began with an apology for going over what must be, to many members, very familiar ground indeed. But, said Mr. Staples, it was surprising to find that even yet the need for this fund was but imperfectly realised in many Fellowship circles. He therefore took the opportunity of outlining this need once again, demonstrating the fact that although the Dickens House managed precariously to make ends meet, there was nothing over for maintenance repairs, redecoration and other inevitable expenses.

It was gratifying to note the ever-increasing recognition of the House as the true depository of Dickensian treasures. This was true not only of such past benefactors, of whom the Count de Suzannet was the chief (as witness his recent gift of the Dickens Marriage Licence),

but new ones such as Mr. Arnold N. Palmer, whose noteworthy gift of a page of the MS. of *Oliver Twist* had excited us all so recently. A happy circumstance in connection with this presentation was the agency of the Victoria and Albert Museum in the matter. No finer testimonial to the worth of the Dickens House could easily be imagined.

A great many branches of the Fellowship had already done or were doing good work for the Fund but a great many more had yet to realise the pressing need for adequate endowment of our great National Memorial to Charles Dickens. Now to be added to the proceeds of the première of *Great Expectations* (£1,300), already mentioned in Council's report, were further donations from the following branches handed to the Chairman at this meeting:

Nottingham ...	£120	Rochester ...	£25
Birmingham ...	£100	Plymouth ...	£20
Blackpool ...	£40	Redditch ...	£10
Blackburn ...	£37 10*s.*	Hatfield ...	£8
Southend ...	£26 5*s.*	Bath ...	£7 12*s.*
Liverpool ...	£25	Portsmouth ...	£2 10*s.*

Many of these sums by no means represented the total effort of the branches named. In the absence of a representative from Vancouver that branch sent £9 15*s.*, bringing the total up to over £3,000, a very happy result. The Chairman expressed the thanks of the Trustees and hoped that other branches would now take up the task and thus build up the fund to such a sum as would provide an income calculated to relieve the Trustees of all anxiety.

Before proceeding to the re-election of Vice-Presidents, Officers and Hon. Auditors, the Chairman performed a simple ceremony of presentation to the Hon. Treasurer who had retired earlier in the year, Mr. T. W. Hill. In outlining his services, rendered to the Fellowship in a great variety of spheres throughout almost its whole history and especially during fifteen years of Treasurership, Mr. Staples emphasised the delight of the members in Mr. Hill's presence among them in such obviously excellent health and expressed his personal satisfaction, which he did not doubt was fully shared by his hearers, that Mr. Hill was to continue his invaluable work on *The Dickensian* unabated. A silver tankard, duly inscribed with "the affection and esteem" of the members, was then presented to him on behalf of the Fellowship. Mr. Hill, who on rising to reply was given a great ovation which deeply moved him, responded in a characteristically felicitous speech.

In considering the venue for the 1948 Conference, an invitation was extended by Mrs. Newberry, President of the Southend Branch, to hold it in that town on May 7th to 10th. This was enthusiastically accepted by the meeting and Mrs. Newberry was asked to convey its thanks to her Committee and members.

The proposition that Rule VIII should be amended, fixing the number of Vice-Presidents to be "not more than twenty-five" was carried after some discussion.

Our Mutual Friend was appointed the book for study during the season 1948-49.

Owing to the length of the Agenda, there was no time left for the usual Reports by Branch Delegates, but as there was present a delegate from overseas for the first time since before the war, the Chairman called upon Miss Gladys Monger, of Boston, Mass. Miss Monger, who was warmly applauded upon rising, said that she brought with her a special message from Mrs. Bagley, the Hon. Secretary of the Boston Branch, which mentioned Mr. Miller's welcome stay there during the war and emphasising the ever-increasing value placed by Bostonians upon the houses in which Dickens stayed while visiting

Boston in 1842 and 1868. These have become "literary shrines." Mention was also made of Mr. Edward F. Payne, the President of the Branch, whose clever drawings have appeared often in these columns. The cordial message concluded with the hope that "the happy day is not far off when a Dickens Fellowship Conference will be held in Boston."

The business concluded with a vote of thanks being accorded to the Chairman in warm tributes from Mr. F. R. Dean, of Manchester, and Mr. T. Sturge-Cotterell, of Bath, and a suitable response from Mr. Staples.

THE CONFERENCE BANQUET

The highlight of Conference was, as usual, the Banquet, which on this occasion took place at the Grosvenor House Hotel, attended by over two hundred guests. The President, Mr. Henry C. Dickens, O.B.E., was in the Chair, supported by many members of the Dickens family and other distinguished guests, including Mr. Arnold N. Palmer, the recent donor to the Dickens House of the page of the MS. of *Oliver Twist*.

TRIBUTE BY M. DENIS SAURAT

The toast of "The Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens" was proposed by M. Denis Saurat, Professor of French Literature at the University of London, who said:

It is a great honour for a Frenchman to address British people on such a subject as Dickens, and we honour ourselves in gathering together to honour so great a man. Great men are rare and, in keeping their memory alive, we keep alive our civilisation.

It gives me great pleasure to speak here to-night after the terrible war from which we have emerged. The fact that many of us have again put on white or black ties and the ladies have resumed their gay apparel of pre-war days shows that Hitler has failed. It shows also that all Hitlers have failed and I have it in mind to go a bit further—it shows that Mr. Shinwell has failed! I do not intend in any way to insult Mr. Shinwell as I am sure that he is very pleased to have failed, by which I mean that he has failed to depress us, and this is the best way we can help and at the same time honour Dickens.

I speak to you to-night because of an alliance which this country has concluded with France, and I am quite sure Dickens would have been in favour of that alliance.

My wife and I have been reading *A Tale of Two Cities* as we have gone to bed each night. It is an excellent practice to read Dickens before going to bed. Mrs. Watts-Dunton at the end of her life told us that her husband with his friend Swinburne (whom he rescued from vices of all kinds) had this habit of reading Dickens every night for an hour before they went to bed. I think it is an overwhelming tribute.

I have been received by members of the Dickens family. I cannot remember any other great man who had the commonsense, after he was dead, to leave behind him worthy representatives, and surely I am allowed a word about Miss Monica Dickens, who is transferring into the twentieth century some of the talent which Dickens has spread on the world.

Now the toast is to "The Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens." Immortal Memory—what are we to do about it? Each generation as it arises has to pay a new tribute to a great man; that is why great men last for ever. Each coming year—each new generation—has to discover something new in a great man, otherwise they have not done their duty. A society like this is an indispensable instrument of civilisation. Homage must be paid, not because of the great man, but because of us, the succeeding generations. It is they that need the great man. And now to go one point further: it is our duty to consider why we are honouring Dickens and we find that the answer changes with every generation. We are trying to assess what is the value of Dickens in the world to-day, and there is no more useful value at the present time.

No doubt the blessed and sainted name of Shakespeare will come to everybody's minds and lips, and there must be enthusiasts here who have read Shakespeare over and over again. Shakespeare is superhuman in one way. Dickens is completely human. Shakespeare is one of the most brilliant of dramatists and poets, but his works go into a single volume. Is there a one-volume Dickens ?! With Dickens we have "bread and butter" that can last us the whole of our life. For the works of Shakespeare we are only fit at certain times ; Dickens we are always fit for. He is a Shakespeare in prose and I cannot conceive of any greater praise that could be given to any man.

Let us look round the world and try to consider who could be compared with Dickens. We discover that Dickens is the most English of all great writers and yet the most un-English—the most un-English in that he appeals to the whole world, as no strictly English writer would. There is something about English literature which makes it a little difficult to make comparisons. Such writers as Milton, Dr. Johnson, Defoe, Meredith, Thos. Hardy—great names, but nowhere in the world do they come on a level keel into the waters of other nations ; but Dickens does. Every nation reads Dickens, understands Dickens and likes Dickens—he is not so much un-English as something in addition to English, and universally human. "From China to Peru" Dickens is read, as a writer from whom real wealth can be derived, and in making this statement it is necessary to discuss a few great names.

In French there is, of course, Balzac, and through all the great names in French literature there is no other that is worthy to be put by the side of Dickens. Dickens is an English Balzac ; Balzac, after all, was the "father." Balzac made the novel into a serious piece of art, which had never been done before, and Dickens sailed into a kingdom that had been made ready for him ; their great works made it clear that novels could be works of the highest literature. Balzac was a sort of footstool which helped Dickens to get on the high platform from which he could reach everybody. However, Balzac had pessimism, bitterness and fear, which do not exist in Dickens. Dickens gives you a sight of human nature and takes into account terror, horror and the bad side of human nature, but at the bottom always is optimism. The man who created Pickwick and David Copperfield was an optimist. There is the integration of misfortune through the worst calamities into something safe at last, but in Balzac you have none of this. Many people who read Balzac have to read Dickens to comfort themselves and to feel that after all, things are not so black as Balzac painted them, that they are black enough but there is something else besides.

Then there is Flaubert whom many say was a pure artist, but there is disillusion in Flaubert. The man who would feed on Flaubert would feel his soul drying up ; he would become cleverer and cleverer, more and more artistic, but he would cease to live. Many Frenchmen have tried to imitate Dickens ; Alphonse Daudet thought of Dickens as a master and tried to do something in French on more or less parallel lines, but I do not think he succeeded. He did well enough and we are very happy to have his work, but indeed he cannot be put alongside Dickens. Georges Duhamel also is worthy to be mentioned. He has given a picture of the life of the French people somewhat comparable to the picture Dickens has given of the English. Dickens is one of those Duhamel admires most, and to him London is the "City of Dickens."

Now what about England ? There are great novelists in England ; how do they compare with Dickens ? First there is Thackeray, and I suspect that all Dickensians read Thackeray on the sly ! They do not quite dare to admit publicly that they have a soft corner for Thackeray, but how can they help it ? He recognised very fully that there was in Dickens something which he, Thackeray, had not, but nevertheless Thackeray is a very great man. However, he is greatest where he is least like Dickens. Anything less like Dickens than *Vanity Fair* I cannot think of, for in his story of Rebecca Sharp, and of the major and the girl whom he marries at last, there is a very sad bitterness behind it all, which would not leave us free to breathe as human beings if we did not have Dickens also. In his other novels I frankly do not think Thackeray can be compared to Dickens. In Dickens we have a wealth of masterpieces (we can name ten—or twelve—or how many you like) ; in Thackeray, apart from *Vanity Fair*, the rest are not in the same category.

Then we have Fielding—a remarkable man. I would not like to blaspheme against the Dickens creed, but perhaps Fielding had even a higher genius than Dickens, but he had not acquired the art that Dickens possessed. *Tom Jones* and *Amelia* are things of the highest value, but Fielding did not know how to write a novel. Still he must be ranked as an "ancestor" of Dickens.

Novels proper were not written until the nineteenth century, and I hope there are no too keen devotees of Jane Austen present, for she must take a subsidiary place. We can perhaps say she is a "maiden aunt" of Dickens, but can accord no higher honour. Before Balzac in France and before Dickens in England, real novels were not written: the art had not been worked out as it was by these two masters.

After Fielding we have Meredith, of whom I am a great admirer. Is it possible to love Meredith and Dickens? I think it is. I also think of Meredith as a "grandson" of Dickens. He was born clever. Some boys *are* born clever and they go on being clever, but it must not be held against them. Dickens was at least the "grandfather" of Meredith and certainly his master.

Further afield the only people who come to my mind, besides the French, are the Russians. Dostoievski and Tolstoi explain Lenin and Stalin. If *we* had had Dostoievski and Tolstoi we should not be here to-night, but at the bottom of some Atlantic or other, for they are poets of destruction—wonderful constructors of huge epics but not human. If you develop their ideas to their logical conclusion, everybody would be destroyed. It is a peculiar Russian temptation and it will be wise to resist it, otherwise we shall all be the victims. Where is Pickwick or David Copperfield in Dostoievski? They do not exist, and humour and commonsense are lacking. Nothing can be learned from Dostoievski and it is hoped that the Russians will forget Dostoievski and Tolstoi a little and take up Dickens. The difficulties of the Moscow Conference would be surmounted if this advice were followed, and if only we could put the Russians on a twenty years' course of Dickens in twenty years' time we should have a permanent peace.

A few words about *A Tale of Two Cities*. Tolstoi's *War and Peace* is too great a masterpiece, but Tolstoi gives too much importance both to war and to peace for, when all is said and done, neither war nor peace is as important as all that. This is shown magnificently in *A Tale of Two Cities*. I must tell you that the French do not like *A Tale of Two Cities* because we in France think all our ancestors who took part in the French Revolution were great heroes and great citizens who never did anything wrong. We are taught in school in France that up to the 1st January, 1789, everything in France was wrong, but that from 12 o'clock on that day everything was right. When I came to England and came up against *A Tale of Two Cities* the book seemed rank blasphemy—how could this man Dickens say such things about the French Revolution?—but as I grew up I knew he was more in the right than any Frenchman I had read on the same subject. My wife and I have had much pleasure in reading it over and now, as I have reached a more mature state of mind, I am completely convinced of the fairmindedness of Dickens in trying to see both sides, the qualities and crimes of each. As to Carlyle, I admire him as much as any man, but I have one objection, which is stated in all modesty, and with which I cannot reconcile my own thoughts; I feel that if Carlyle had known about Hitler he might have said something in his favour and I could not stomach that. Dickens, on the other hand, would have recounted the crimes of Hitler while yet saying what could be said on the side of the Germans. He gave fairminded and impartial statements, whereas there is no book in French or any other language that can really be put beside *A Tale of Two Cities*. Some people would raise objections against this book historically or otherwise—don't believe them. Our Chairman has made vigorous attacks on the people who have slandered Dickens; to such people there is only one attitude—don't believe them! In the same way if anybody writes against *A Tale of Two Cities*, don't believe them, for you have a fairer idea in that book of what happened than anywhere else, and its writing gave Dickens the right to be called a very deep thinker.

Dickens had a sense of the absurdity of human nature, and this is the only true explanation of history. He does not talk of wickedness, but leaves it at absurdity. Puritans go too far in their theories about wickedness, for human nature is a good thing, but it can be absurd, and it is the absurdities

which give the wicked people their chance. Dickens presents about the most satisfactory side of human history that can be recorded, as it gives us hope, for you can go from a sense of the absurd to humour and thence to reasonable optimism. Where Browning would have said "God's in His Heaven, all's right with the world," Dickens would say, "Man is on earth, all's wrong with the world, yet all is right at bottom."

The toast of "The Dickens Fellowship" was proposed by Mr. Frank Singleton, Editor of the *Bolton Evening News*, and replied to by Mr. G. H. Stuart-Bunning, O.B.E. Character sketches from Dickens were given by Mr. Percy Merriman and Mr. J. Greaves, and music by Miss Grace Maxted, harpist, and songs by Master Gerald Regan. The evening concluded with the toast to the Chairman, in proposing which, Mr. Leo Mason, Hon. Secretary of the Blackburn Branch, made a most telling speech in his very happiest vein. Mr. Dickens duly responded.

A CROWDED SUNDAY

On Sunday morning, members could choose between four rambles in Dickens's London, all of which were well attended. Mrs. Gwen Major conducted a party around some of the City Churches described in *The Uncommercial Traveller*, Mr. G. F. Young dealt with the pressing claims of the Borough, Lincoln's Inn was safe in the hands of Mr. W. H. Lowry, and Mr. Percy Merriman led the way around St. Pancras. In the afternoon the Dickens House was on view to visiting members and members of the Committee were there to welcome them.

In the evening a Commemorative Service was held at Southwark Cathedral, attended by the Mayor and Mayoress of Southwark, Councillor and Mrs. J. E. Wright, the Corporation of Wardens, and a large congregation which entirely filled the Nave. The lessons were read by Mr. Leslie C. Staples, Hon. Editor of *The Dickensian* (Ecclesiasticus XLIV, 1-14) and Mr. Geo. F. Young, Churchwarden of St. Saviours and the retiring Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Dickens Fellowship (St. Luke X, 25-37).

The sermon was preached by the Rev. Canon T. P. Stevens, A.K.C., whose kindly personality and enthusiasm have long endeared him to countless literary pilgrims to Southwark. He took as his text, "I believe in the Holy Ghost who spake through the prophets."

SERMON, BY REV. CANON T. P. STEVENS

In Southwark Cathedral the first great literary figure of whom we think, said Canon Stevens, is Shakespeare, but many other names occur to us, for whose genius we cannot account unless we acknowledge it to be the gift of God. What is a genius? A man of exceptional gifts, unheralded, unexpected, usually of commonplace antecedents, using his gifts to the glory of God and for the benefit of mankind. We were gathered together to praise God for the life and work of Charles Dickens. It was well that he should be commemorated in Southwark, on which he has left innumerable marks. His name will always be associated with London Bridge, the Marshalsea, and with Guy's Hospital, and his characters such as Mr. Pickwick, David Copperfield, Mr. Mell, Bob Sawyer and Ben Allen crowd its streets. The Holy Spirit possessed Dickens and enabled him to do his noble work for the sons of man. We cannot tie God down to rules; no rule will account for Charles Dickens. A resistless power drove him on, and possessed of that power, he used it with diligence and energy, always "on the side of the angels." A true psychologist, he saw the difference in men. He had the gift of imagination and, above all, sympathy. "Blessed are they that mourn," or, as it might be otherwise expressed, blessed are they that are capable of compassion. His interest in the unfortunate whom he untiringly sought out, at the Farmhouse for instance, not far from the Cathedral, proved him to be an essentially religious man; he was always "on the side of the angels."

After the Service, at a small meeting in the Chapter House, the Mayor officially welcomed the Dickens Fellowship to Southwark, and Mr. Leslie C. Staples suitably replied, adding also the thanks of the Fellowship to the Provost and Chapter of the Cathedral, and to Canon Stevens for making the arrangements for the beautiful service just concluded. Mr. Staples also thanked Canon Stevens for his gift to the Dickens House of a fine etching by Hubert J. Williams of "The Old Farmhouse" to which reference had been made in the sermon and which figures in "On Duty with Inspector Fields" in *Reprinted Pieces*.

PILGRIMAGE TO BROADSTAIRS

Conference was splendidly concluded on the Monday with a motor-coach pilgrimage to Broadstairs. The party filled six large coaches which, by making an early start, made the journey through "the garden of England" in excellent time to be received at mid-day by Councillor J. L. Cuming, Chairman of Broadstairs Urban District Council, who was introduced by Councillor D. G. Galloway, Chairman of the Broadstairs Branch of the Dickens Fellowship.

Councillor Cuming referred to the pride the townspeople took in the many associations of Dickens with Broadstairs and expressed the hope that the visitors would take away many happy memories of their all too-brief stay. Suitable replies were made by Mr. Staples and Mr. Merriman.

After an excellent lunch, tours of the memorials of Dickens's many visits to the town were carried out. By the special permission of the owners, the garden of Bleak House (Fort House when Dickens stayed there) was inspected, as well as the other houses occupied at various times by the novelist, all tableted by the Broadstairs Branch many years ago. But the highlight for everyone was to inspect the charming little house which once belonged to Mary Strong, the original of Betsey Trotwood, and which was undoubtedly transferred to Dover in the pages of *David Copperfield*. Throughout the entire afternoon the members were conducted through the house by the generous owner, Miss Tattam, who is also the Hon. Secretary of the revived Broadstairs Branch of the Fellowship. She was assisted by her friend, Miss Waterer, the Director of the Broadstairs Dickens Players. The great success of the day was largely due to Miss Tattam's kindness, which is here most gratefully acknowledged.

Having made the rounds of these interesting sights, members enjoyed strolls along the cliff tops and on the beaches of the pretty little bay whose charm has been so miraculously preserved since Dickens's day. The bright sunshine added to the general enjoyment.

After tea, the party set forth on the return to London, which was reached about 9 o'clock, thus concluding yet one more highly successful Conference.

L. C. S.

THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY

By ALAIN de SUZANNET.

LIKE all youthful writers of genius, Charles Dickens set no value on the manuscripts of his early works, and even in the days when *Pickwick*, *Oliver Twist* and *Nickleby* were earning for their author immortal fame, Boz the Inimitable craved only the "glory of Print."

What would we give to-day to possess the original drafts of *Mr. Minns and his Cousin*, *The Boarding House*, and those other tales and sketches which the twenty-two-year-old reporter contributed to the *Monthly Magazine* or *Morning Chronicle*! Alas! Not a single page of the essays which were the foundation of Dickens's literary career has been preserved for posterity. A fragment of *O'Thello*, a childish and mediocre attempt at burlesque play-writing, casually rescued by John Dickens-Micawber and sold by him in later years for a substantial amount of "the ready," *The Sketches of Young Gentlemen*, *The Sketches of Young Couples*, *The Lamplighter*, and a few contributions to the Albums of his lady friends, are in all probability the only products of Dickens's youthful pen which have survived entire; and these, unfortunately, belong to the minor, or rather to the "minimum," class of prose and poetry.

Of the great early novels, only portions of manuscript have been saved; about 24 chapters of *Oliver Twist* are included in the Forster bequest to the Victoria and Albert Museum, and to the foresight of Messrs. Bradbury and Evans's clever and efficient foreman-printer we owe the escape from the waste-paper basket of at least 33 pages of the original manuscript of *The Pickwick Papers* and 140 pages of the manuscript of *Nickleby*.

Little appears to be known of "Mr. Hicks," who was, for a number of years, the technical head of the Bradbury and Evans printing establishment. Dickens was certainly on the most friendly terms with Hicks since the days when *Pickwick*, *The Library of Fiction* and *Sunday Under Three Heads* were appearing almost simultaneously. Several of the author's letters relating to the printing of *Pickwick* and *Nickleby* are extant, as are also the notes inviting Hicks to the Pickwick and Nickleby dinners. We may further gather, from a letter addressed to Thomas Chapman in June 1844, that Hicks's wife was invited by Dickens to attend a public dinner in company with the members of what he designates as his "Printers' Party," which included such distinguished persons as John Leech, Gilbert A'Beckett, the Mark Lemons and Miss Chambers.

Thirty-three pages of the original manuscript of *The Pickwick Papers* and all that is known to have survived of the *Nickleby* manuscript were treasured for many years in the Hicks family. In 1882, these relics were purchased by Charles B. Foote, and in 1895 they passed into the collection of William A. White of Brooklyn.

The subsequent history of the *Pickwick* fragments has been related in *The Dickensian* (1932, pages 193-196).

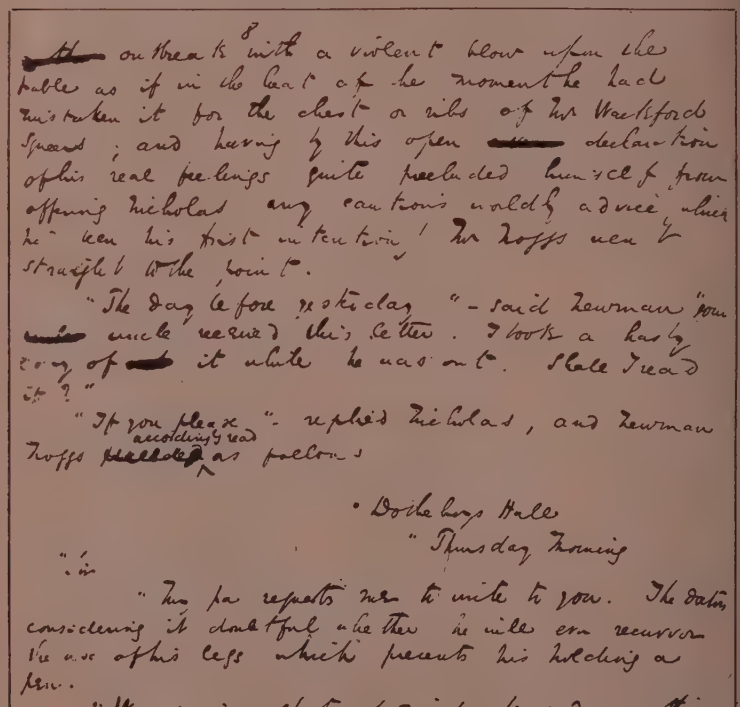
In 1932, A. S. W. Rosenbach owned the 140 pages and one half-page, which are probably all that remains of the original manuscript of *Nicholas Nickleby*. They comprise: Chapter IX complete (39 pages); Chapter X complete (28 pages); Chapter XV (the first 22 pages, numbered 1-22); Chapter XVI (10 pages, numbered 61-70); Chapter

XVII (11 pages, numbered 9-19); Chapter XX (30½ pages, numbered 67-94 and 104-106).

In August, 1932, the 39 pages of Chapter IX, which contain the narration of some of the main occurrences at Dotheboys Hall, including Miss Squeers's tea-party, were disposed of by the Rosenbach Company and subsequently presented to the Dickens House (June, 1938).

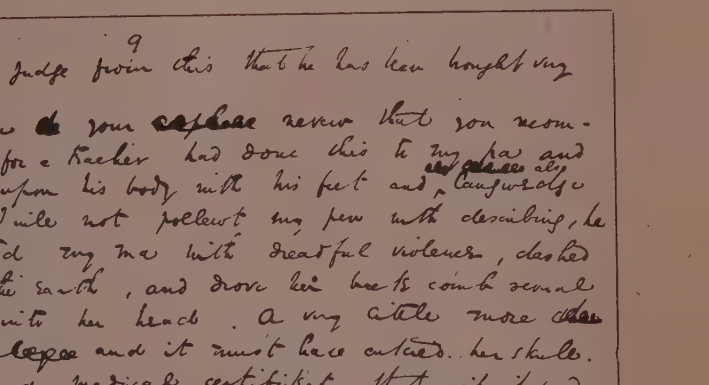
In January, 1947, the 22 surviving pages of Chapter XV passed into the Dickens library of La Petite Chardière, Lausanne. They include Fanny Squeers's famous letter* and the Kenwigs supper so happily presided over by Uncle Lillyvick, the water-rate collector.

At the present time of writing (March, 1947), the remaining surviving portion of the *Nicholas Nickleby* manuscript (79½ pages) is in the possession of Doctor Rosenbach.



*The three pages containing this letter are herewith reproduced from photographs by de Jongh of Lausanne.

The text of the *Nickleby* manuscript reveals only few and unimportant variants when compared with that of the first edition. Mr. Hicks evidently took upon himself to correct occasional mistakes in spelling and grammar. In Chapter XV, for instance, we note: *accommodation, favourable, mugful, show,* substituted for *accomodation, favorable, mug-full, shew.* In his revision of the proofs of this same chapter, Dickens, with unerring judgment, suppressed two passages of sixteen lines and one page respectively. A few redundant epithets have been deleted or improved (*e.g. corduroy* (shorts) altered to *drab*). In one instance the manuscript text should be preferred to the printed one: Dickens had written originally: Biped lions are *sulky only so long as* their appetite for distinction remains unappeased. The printed text reads: Biped lions are *rarely sulky longer than when* their appetite



9

You will judge from this that he has been brought very low.

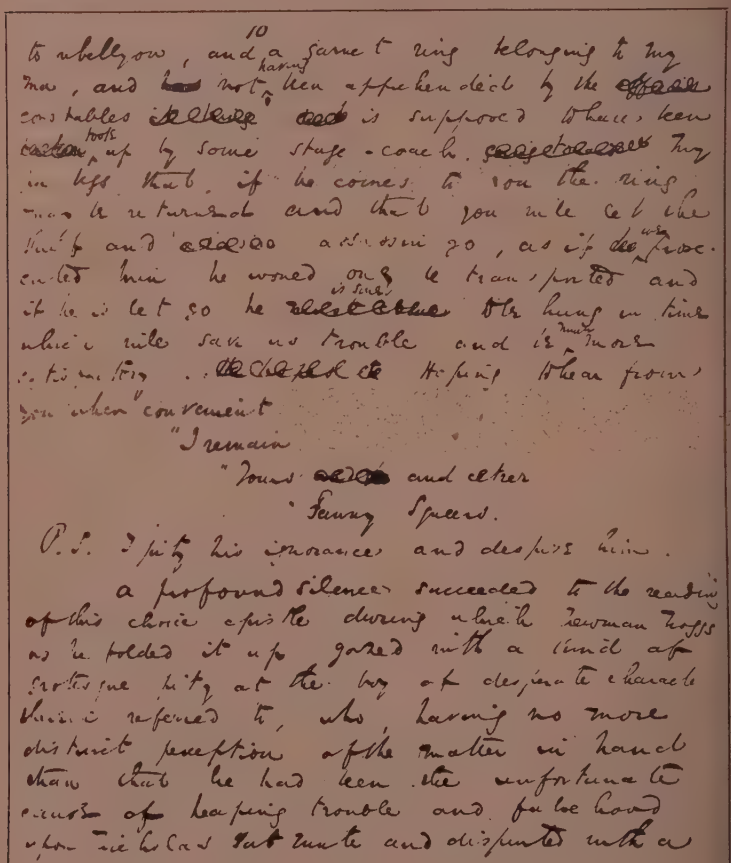
"When your [illegible] never that you recommended for a teacher had done this to my pa and jumped upon his body with his feet and [illegible] also language which I will not pollewt my pen with describing, he assaulted my ma with dreadful violence, dashed her to the earth, and drove her back comb several inches into her head. A very little more [illegible] and it must have entered her skull. We have a medical certifiket that if it had the [illegible] tortershell would have affected the brain. [illegible]

"Me and my brother were then the victims of his fewry since which we have suffered [illegible] very much inwardly, which leads us to the [illegible] belief that we have received some injury [illegible] in our insides, especially as no marks of violence are visible externally. I am screaming out loud all the [illegible] time I write and so is my brother which takes off my attention rather and I hope will excuse mistakes.

"The monster having satiated his thirst for blood ran away, taking with him a boy of desperate [illegible] character that he had excited

for distinction remains unappeased; which seems a most regrettable emendation.

As a conclusion to these notes, the writer expresses the hope that, in a not too distant future, the whole of the 140 surviving pages of the *Nickleby* manuscript will find a permanent home in that most fitting resting-place for all documents of Dickensian interest—the DICKENS HOUSE.



to rebellyow, and 10 a garnet ring belonging to my
ma, and not having been apprehended by the
constables is supposed to have been
tooth up by some stage-coach. my
in legs that, if he comes to you the ring
may be returned and that you will let the
thief and assassin go, as if we prose-
cuted him he would only be transported and
if he is let go he is sure to be hung in time
which will save us trouble and be much more
satisfactory. Hoping to hear from
you when convenient

"I remain

"Yours and ever

"Fanny Squeers.

P.S. I pity his ignorance and despise him.

A profound silence succeeded to the reading
of this choice epistle during which Newman Noggs
as he folded it up gazed with a kind of
grotesque pity at the boy of desperate character
therein referred to, who, having no more
distinct perception of the matter in hand
than that he had been the unfortunate
cause of heaping trouble and falsehood
upon Nicholas sat mute and disputed with a

THE BOOK FOR STUDY THIS YEAR IS
GREAT EXPECTATIONS

SHOULD A BIOGRAPHER TELL?

THE STORY OF DICKENS'S DENUNCIATION OF THOMAS POWELL'S FORGERIES*

By WILFRED PARTINGTON

I

WHEN Samuel Johnson was making the famous Hebridean jaunt in 1773 with that gay incomparable showman James Boswell, who was to out-*Tour* the master's *Journey* so brilliantly and maliciously, a Scottish host asked the Doctor if it was not wrong in Orrery to expose the defects of a man (meaning Dean Swift) with whom he lived in intimacy? "Why no, Sir, after the man is dead;" replied Johnson, "for then it is done historically."

Bozzy pricked up his ears. For by this time he well knew what he was about: the seed of his great idea was germinating, and he had long been cultivating the rich Johnsonian earth for the magnificent biographical growth it was to yield. Besides, the argument touched him also if he applied it to his own dissipations—the "Tartars" he'd "catch'd," etc.—which he was in the habit of confiding to friend Temple, surely one of the broadest-minded clerics in literary annals. So, on a later occasion he came back again at the ticklish question: to record the Sage's dictum which hailed with a characteristically Johnsonian blow the essential truth that should motivate biography:

> "If a man is to write *A Panegyrick* he may keep vices out of sight; but if he proposes to write *A Life*, he must represent it as it really was."

At one of their earliest suppers at The Mitre Tavern in Fleet Street, Dr. Johnson told young Boswell that the biographical part of literature was what he loved most. It is so with most of us. Even to mere fiction readers there often comes at some point in a novel, if it is written with the art of a Hardy, or a Dickens, or a Sinclair Lewis, or a Conrad, the impression that some character or other is real and that they are invisibly present in its company. In other words, they are reading the story as if it were biography—as not infrequently it is. Some, it may be suspected, even fit their own unwritten autobiographies into the pages of realistic novels. My concern here, however, is not with psychological escapism, but with hard biographical facts. Nevertheless, we are rather less interested in the things done, which tomorrow may be undone or surpassed, than with their doers and the forces that urged them: for therein lie the keys to the future undoing and reshaping. This is what Emerson meant when he affirmed:

> "There is properly no history, only biography."

The real historians then are our biographers, autobiographers, and diarists. Their art is old enough by now, it might be thought, to ensure a general acceptance of and adherence to the Johnsonian precept above. Yet with all the lessons they have had that Truth will out at last and that the researcher eventually elucidates Mystery and exposes the False, how often do biographers fail to represent a *Life* as it really was! True, there are a few biographies which have engraved in literature for all time vivid portraits of grand men—biographies like Lockhart's of Sir Walter Scott, and Forster's of Charles Dickens. But Lockhart in his classic played the devil's tricks with correspondence (as I have seen in re-handling the originals): and in order to toady to wealthy publisher Robert Cadell, he savagely and unjustly mauled Sir Walter's friend James Ballantyne, his "dear Tom Tell-Truth." And both Lockhart

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and Forster were unfortunately reticent to the point of being misleading about certain phases in the lives of their heroes, including those matrimonial. It was Forster, too, who had the lamentable habit of cutting up Dickens's letters to paste pieces into his MS. narrative—thus losing entirely the script on the back. The result, however unintentional, was to destroy the original evidence of whole letters.

Considering the variety and brilliance of subjects, it is strange that so few impressive and satisfying *Lives* have been added to English-written literature. One opportunity that was missed (it is mentioned to point my main thesis) was when it came to the authoritative biographizing of Charles Kingsley, whose place in literary annals does him less than justice. It is surely an extraordinary prejudice that keeps him out of certain series of English biographies in which writers are included who counted for far less than the "Fighting Parson." Was it that he fought too early and too well the unpopular social battle that was to be won many years later? Or was it that he dared, but failed in the historic encounter with Newman that produced the *Apologia pro Vita sua*? Anyhow, he was worthy of a biography as vigorous and full-blooded as himself. Maybe he is not in the highest rank of novelists, though his *Westward Ho!* was a best-seller that for long thrilled the English-speaking world and his *Water Babies* is a children's classic that publishers still bring out—not to speak further of his rôle as a social reformer, a rôle as yet inadequately realised. Instead of which the writing and editing of his Memoir and Letters was left to the object of his devotion.

Good wives ought to be prohibited from perpetuating bad biographies and incurring literary damnation. Woman is revealing only to her beloved or about her rival. Fanny Kingsley had difficulties apart from those inherent to the feminine psychology. I learned of them when her large and lavendered bandbox full of personal documents came into my possession. As I saw how the manuscript of her work had been submitted to Very Important People for this one to prune and that one to puff out, and how her own emasculating and suppressing had taken so much character out of her husband's papers, it was obvious why those two volumes seemed like a stuffed *Life* on two legs. If her ardent lover-husband anticipated the Fleshly School of Poetry in unprinted love-lyrics fit to make Swinburne and Rossetti shout with joy, that was Fanny's dear secret. It was not for biography—certainly not for a biography by the Rector's widow writing within the shadows of Queen Victoria's ample petticoats and the episcopal aprons of the Church of England. Good Heavens, No!

The *Life* of Charles Kingsley was published two years after his death. That fact and the relationship of its compiler explain its failure. Probably nine out of ten first or early biographies that aim seriously to present their subjects are published twenty or twenty-five years too soon to be complete or even wholly truthful about what is known. Correspondence and information is apt, for a variety of reasons, to come slowly to light. It is often the case, as the old proverb says, that "Truth lies at the bottom of a well," whether it falls there or is pushed in; and certain it is that the wells of biography are very deep, and some are slow in yielding their secrets.

The usual announcement of prospective and prospecting biographers, that they are about to begin and will welcome letters and reminiscences, is sometimes oddly optimistic. When material is scattered afar and in many hands, how slight the chance that the naive appeal will reach all sources, or that those who see it and can contribute will approve the petitioner as a suitable biographer or may at that juncture have the time for hunting through their papers or

setting down recollections. That greatest of all dictionaries of biography the Bible has laid it down that the race is not to the swift. But our biographers are mostly in such a hurry to entertain and enlighten the world which itself is in so mad a haste that it is losing the art of enjoying its pleasures.

Consideration of the time factor brings us against a graver circumstance that restricts biography both as historical record and as an ethical instrument—the latter a function which seems generally unappreciated. This is the present clamping effect of the libel laws in Britain and America on writers whose duty it is to deal with delicate matters where people concerned are still living. For example, the truth is just as likely as an untruth to constitute an actionable libel. And satire, which in sturdier social conditions was so often the most effective corrector, has been robbed of its one vital force: for it is now punishable, by involvement in costly legal proceedings, if used (however deservedly) to hold up a person or thing to ridicule that is damaging.

The result, for writers in general and biographers in particular, is a growing tendency to keep the picture pretty at all costs, to leave unpleasant facts alone. Not for them the honesty of Oliver Cromwell, who, when sitting for his portrait, said: "Mr. Lely, I desire you would use all your skill to paint my picture truly like me, and not to flatter me at all; but remark all those roughnesses, pimples, warts, and everything as you see me, otherwise I never will pay a farthing for it." It is safer and easier nowadays to whitewash than to portray faithfully. Perhaps those who bow to the modern forces of corruption and regimentation, working hand in hand, stifle their consciences by the hopeful philosophizing that as the evil man does lives after him why should they worry? But, if Truth is suppressed, then Evil nor merely goes unchecked but is encouraged. The success of rascality and unscrupulousness lies not in their profit immediately, but in their being kept dark ultimately.

With the foregoing attempt to state briefly a large and grave case—namely, that present-day criticism in general, and biography in particular, are by a combination of corruptive influences failing to do their job honestly and with proper regard for the higher purpose of literature—I come to a remarkable instance of this failure in the all-important department of National Biography. For this is a department which, concerned only with historical fact and under obligation to observe judicial detachment and impartiality, might be considered impervious to the restrictive and subversive circumstances which have been indicated.

II

In the eighteen-forties there flourished in the City of London, then waxing fat with wealth from sweated labour, one Thomas Chapman, senior proprietor in the firm of John Chapman & Company, merchants of 2 Leadenhall Street. He also held the high position of Chairman of Lloyds Register of Shipping: so that for power and affluence his business house could truly be described by the term, which has long been a world-wide criterion of excellence "A1 at Lloyds." On the 28th of June, 1846, Charles Dickens wrote to his confidant, John Forster, exultantly announcing that yesterday he

"BEGAN DOMBEY!"

The relationship of these two contemporaneous circumstances lies in the identification of Thomas Chapman as the original of Paul Dombey senior, the central figure of Dickens's immediately successful novel. *Dealings with the Firm of Dombey and Son, Wholesale, Retail & for Exportation* was the full title of a satire which portrayed Pride from pomp to prostration, and (perhaps less intentionally) made the Gods

of the Stock Market the laughing-stock of Time—a story, with its immortal humours, in which literature left the jolly, friendly, bone-shaking stage coaches, for that new "triumphant monster" the railway train. The statement "For Exportation" refers, of course, to the author's growing and not less appreciative American public, however much or little the moralizings applied.

But Forster would have none of the identification; and he quoted Dickens (but not in support of his contention) as saying that the man for Dombey, if Hablôt K. Browne the illustrator could see him, was "Sir A.— E.— of D—s." This may have been a suggestion to throw the artist off the scent, or to prevent him from making a literal delineation of the real original: it is evident that the picturing caused the novelist anxiety, for Forster reproduces no less than twenty-nine sketches for Mr. Dombey, which Browne submitted for making a choice. However, Edwin Pugh, that worthy Dickensian who in 1912 listed all (save one) of the identifiable Dickens originals, unhesitatingly adopted the Chapman prototype for Dombey senior, and made fun of the too Podsnappish disclaimer by Forster. These pages will throw a little more light on the identification, and also on the biographer's "harbitrary" shyness about one of the merchant's employees.

By the courtesy of [*Lloyd's Register of Shipping*

Thomas Chapman.

For in the counting-house of Chapman and Co. was employed Charles Dickens's youngest brother, Augustus, engaged in 1844: and also a remarkable character named Thomas Powell, then aged thirty-five. Augustus, on leaving school, was comfortably installed with the merchant by the influence of his big and popular brother; who assured Chapman that he had no reason to suppose the youth was "addicted to authorship, or any bad habits of that nature." Charles's nickname for Augustus was "Moses": which, facetiously pronounced "Boses," became "Boz;" and so was immortalised in the title of Dickens's first work, *Sketches by Boz*. Another nickname given by Charles to his brother was "Shrimp." Augustus, however, did not find the merchant's counting-house very comfortable for long. After a few years he crossed the Atlantic to the Land of Promise, where no doubt he was flattered and spoiled by the American adorers of brother Charles, and where certainly he died in comparative obscurity.

But, unlike Shrimp, Thomas Powell, who was a married man with a family of conventional Victorian size, *was* addicted to the habit of authorship—not to speak of graver ones for the moment. He wrote second-class poetry with some facility, and better class prose with more success: also, he was a playwright. Becoming friendly with Wordsworth, he produced in collaboration with him, Leigh Hunt, R. H. Horne, and others, a modernised edition of Chaucer. He is stated by Kitton (in his work *Charles Dickens*, 1902) to have had "a trick of becoming very confidential on small or no provocation, and possessed a perfect mania for writing letters, even to persons in the same room." These idiosyncrasies were presumably partial basis for the report, first quoted by Kitton, that Powell—as well as Dickens's father—contributed to the character of Mr. Micawber: an identification accepted and adopted by Pugh. Powell's literary activities, as a relief from his responsible duties in Chapman's office, were expensive rather than lucrative. But he appeared to the world to be a man of independent means: he entertained lavishly. Well-fed guests can be cheap and useful publicity agents.

Among the authors he got in with, naturally, was the creator of *Pickwick*, whose regard for the agreeable dilettante can be estimated by the following extract from a typically high-spirited letter:

> Devonshire Terrace,
> Sixteenth April, 1844
>
> My Dear Powell,—Lord bless you! Thursday or Friday!!! Why, I composed (though I say it as shouldn't) the best little party you can imagine; comprehending everybody I had room for, whom I thought Mr. Chapman would like to know. Let me see. Rogers for Poetry, Sydney Smith for Orthodoxy, Charles Kemble and Young for Theatricality, Lord Denman for Benchity, Lord Dudley Stuart for Polarity, Mr. and Mrs. Milner Gibson for Anti Corn Law Leagueability, Mrs. Norton for beauty, and divers other for variety. Lord love you! Why at this time of the year it couldn't be done again under three weeks. Not to mention the Dwarf, General Tom Thumb, whom on the word of a spiritiwal creetur, I had summoned, and have summoned, for the Evening in question. No. We won't come down with the rum. We'll have a long notice, and see what can be done with the second wentur. When we doos go in, we plays to win, Sir.
>
> Says Shrimp to me (I allude to the humble individual who has the honor to be my brother) "Mr. Powell is coming up one evening"—"Shrimp," said I, "Why evening? We dine at half-past 5. Cannot said Powell, with a day's notice (to ensure my not being out) come up to dinner?" I saw that I had touched him; and had a modest confidence in my message reaching you safely. Whether Shrimp broke down, or Prawn (otherwise Powell) I don't know . . .

This is the first of the four known letters from Dickens to Thomas Powell, of which the text of the last (dated 20th Feb., 1846) is not available. The second letter, although not germane to my design, is worthy of a quotation for its wisdom and self-revelation. Powell had apparently been concerned, in his confidential way, to warn the novelist about some early love-affair of Shrimp's. Dickens replied that he was disposed, "subject to your corrective judgment," to ignore the matter for various given reasons the fourth of which was that at the worst it might keep Augustus "out of other harm's way." Then he adds:

> "I broke my heart into the smallest pieces, many times between thirteen and three and twenty. Twice, I was very horribly in earnest: and once I really set upon the cast, for six or seven long years, all the energy and determination of which I am owner. But it went the way of nearly all such things at last, though I think it kept me steadier than the working of my nature was, to many good things for the time.

"If anyone had interfered with my very small Cupid, I don't know what absurdity I might not have committed; but having plenty of rope he hanged himself, beyond all chance of restoration.

"I have asked no question of my father or mother, for though I am dutiful, I am not altogether disposed to trust to their discretion in such a case. But I have sounded my brother Fred; and he seems to think the Virgin may be "only joking." She may be a Platonic Virgin, perhaps. Who knows? . . ."

Very affable letters, be it noted—leaving Shrimp to his love, and Prawn to his prune.

III

When a novelist or a dramatist takes a prototype from life for one of his characters, the degree of faithfulness in the subsequent portraiture depends upon the individual writer's art and the particular requirement of his work as a whole. Novelists like Honoré de Balzac, Thomas Hardy, and Joseph Conrad, were psychological analysts who tended to work closely to their models, or their conceptions of them, in order to obtain fidelity to life. Charles Dickens arrived at the same end—the presentation of living characters with whom his readers could laugh or weep or sentimentalize—by different methods, taking this or that physical or mental idiosyncrasy from his originals and exaggerating it in the manner of a caricaturist.

Thus, for example, while the chief proprietor of Chapman and Company no doubt inspired the character of Mr. Dombey, in the result the head of Dombey and Son became a caricature of Mr. Chapman. This is borne out by the facts as we know them and also by the few letters from Dickens to the merchant of Leadenhall Street. Dombey, with his single-track mind, with the firm of Dombey and Son as the Alpha and Omega of existence, would not have had either time or inclination for the arts, which meant nothing to his ledgers. He would have felt himself above those rather irregular and financially unsound persons who wrote high-falutin' stuff, or painted scandalous pictures of men out of their shirts and women out of their chemises, or mimicked on the stage—amusing as they might sometimes be. With Thomas Chapman, when away from his counting-house, the reverse was the case; and in this respect at least he as the original differed from and was superior to the character in the book.

The first recorded association of the novelist with the real-life merchant is in 1836—an engagement to dine with him; and later the same year, "We are just going to Chapman's sister's quadrille party." The few known letters that Dickens subsequently wrote to him are mainly concerned with such mutually agreeable social amenities, one to do with a play performance. They evince the cordiality, mingled with a nice shade of respect, in which he held Chapman. But one of them ought to be quoted (though slightly out of the chronology of events) as a specimen of an approach which Mr. Dombey might have considered sufficiently deferential. It was written, 22nd November, 1848, when Shrimp had been caught in the net of Love—whether by the aforesaid virgin, platonic or otherwise, cannot, alas, be stated. Anyhow, big brother Charles, "using the privilege of friendship," enquires of Chapman whether he (Dickens) shall ask him to come to breakfast on the occasion of Augustus's marriage:

". . . But I feel it so probable that it might be inconvenient or tiresome to you, or that there may be very rational and necessary considerations to render it 'unbusinesslike' (I use the phrase for want of a better) in reference to so young a man engaged in your house . . ."

Alas ! again we do not know whether the whale attended the little fish's wedding-feast. Nevertheless Chapman was obviously proud of employing in the "House" a brother of England's most popular author, and also the trusted young man Thomas Powell—who, when away from his responsible duties with the merchant's finances, hob-nobbed with Wordsworth, Dickens, Leigh Hunt, the Brownings, and other lights. This was contact with the great, brought about by the influence of the great House. The thought was highly satisfying to its head.

Then one awful day in the year 1846 the bladder of Mr. Chapman's pride and complacency was pricked—just as Mr. Dombey's was when fate dared to take away his son Paul, heir to the Firm of Dombey and Son. But Thomas Powell only took from the original firm some £10,000. The amount has never been authoritatively stated : Chapman and Co., in a certified testimony spoke of his "series of frauds, effected both by *forgery* and peculation, to a large amount ;" and Dickens mentioned "thousands of pounds."

The details of the affair are scanty, apart from the dramatic accounts written at the time by Dickens and now to be given here. It is sufficient for the moment to say that apparently out of consideration for Powell's wife and family, and most probably also having regard to his distinguished literary connections, the forger was not prosecuted by his employers, who were content to dismiss him summarily. The House could stand a loss of £10,000. The amount would be written off in the year's balance-sheet, which was perhaps endorsed with a new rule : "No more literary geniuses or relatives of literary geniuses to be employed here." Certainly Mr. Dombey would have so ordained.

Dickens when he heard the sensational news was in Switzerland ; and he at once wrote the following letter to Chapman, the tenor of which it is important to bear in mind in view of the sequel :

My dear Sir,—It was a very considerate and friendly act for you to time your communication on the most painful subject of the breach of confidence in your house, as you did, and to make it to me yourself. Accept my thanks for this proof of your regard among many others, and with this the assurance of my friendship and esteem.

I have been perfectly horrified by the whole story. I could hardly name a man in London whom I should have thought less likely to stand so committed, than he. Not that I had any intimate knowledge of his pursuits, or any close acquaintance with himself, or with his usual mode of thinking and proceeding—but I had an idea of his great steadiness and reliability, and a conviction of his great respect and regard for you. God help him. I believe even now, that he was sincere in the latter feeling, and was overcome and swept away by the tide of circumstances on which he had madly cast himself. The more I hear and see of such surprises, the more I echo that clause in Christ's prayer in which they are all shadowed forth, and shrink from the prospect of temptation being presented to anybody dear to me, or to myself.

It has often awakened great wonder within me how all those publishing expenses (of the extent of which, I am able to form a pretty accurate idea) were defrayed. But whenever I have sounded Augustus on the subject ; which I have done once or twice, he always hinted at a rich uncle, and some unknown share in some unknown business, which of course, I could not gainsay. He told the tale as it was told to him, and had every reason to believe it. Indeed I suppose you and your partners laboured under the like delusion ?

I should be very glad if you would tell me, when it is all done, whether you have any intelligence of him, or any knowledge of his destiny. It is terrible to think of his wife and children . . .

(Lausanne, 3 July, 1846).

It is necessary to keep in mind that at the date of this letter the novelist, so far removed from the City of London, was writing the opening chapters of *Dombey and Son* and building up its central character on Thomas Chapman. There are two predominant features in the letter: firstly, the absence in it of any particular expression of sympathy with the House in its heavy financial loss; and secondly, the extenuatory almost sympathetic, nature of Dickens's references to Powell. There is no throwing of stones here at the sinner "swept away by the tide of circumstances."

The course of the forger's destiny during the remainder of 1846 and the next two years is again obscure; but the revelations in the final section of this study will indicate some of his secret activities. It is most likely that he lay low for this period—hoping that the scandal would be forgotten as it had been forgiven, and waiting with Mr. Micawber's philosophy for something to turn up.

Sure enough, in the last few weeks of 1848 something did turn up. But it was something most unpleasant: a warrant, issued by the Croydon magistrates, for Powell's arrest in connection with further alleged forgeries. The facts are briefly told in the letter from Dickens to Gaylord Clark that follows: they are corroborated by the contemporary account in *The Times* of 10th January, 1849. By a conspiracy which temporarily gave him refuge in a private lunatic asylum, Powell eluded the clutches of a Police-Inspector Shaw. For the second time he escaped the justice of the law. And in the Spring of 1849, as George Barrington, the Prince of Pickpockets had done in 1791, he "left his country for his country's good." He landed in America. It is now that the story gets exciting and Dickens enters on his new rôle.

(To be concluded.)

CONTEMPORARY VIEWS OF DICKENS

CONTRIBUTED BY WM. MILLER

II

POPULAR PORTRAITS—CHARLES DICKENS

IT is possible to be a public man without being a popular one, and we have included some names in the series of our "portraits" that may be considered rather as coming under the former class than the latter. But no one will dispute the right of the gifted individual whose name stands at the head of the present sketch to be ranked one of our "popular portraits." It is one of the advantages attending literary eminence that it may frequently be attained without entailing on its possessor any of that "envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness" which too often awaits those who, by far different paths, have proved—

> How hard it is to climb
> The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar.

They may have a pride in looking behind and beneath them on those they have passed, but they must also be conscious that they have not made a single step unaccompanied by the grudgings and envyings of their competitors. The contest of the bar and the senate induce, almost of necessity, an admixture of personal bitterness in the conflict; in the same degree as one must feel exalted with triumph must the other feel humiliated to the sense of defeat. But no such feelings need exist among the competitors in the field of literature. It is a wide one, affording room for many kinds of greatness—a boundless sphere in which may move many orbs all bright and beautiful, and yet differing in their brightness, "even as one star differeth from

another in glory." We, of course, speak of literature of the higher kind, when it is not turned to an instrument of political or party controversy, for then its nature is subdued to what it works in, and it becomes, not degrading, perhaps, but at least lowered. Great was the fame and high position attained by Walter Scott, but we believe he had not one enemy; Southey has just passed from among us with the affection of all who knew him, and the regret of the far wider circle who knew him for his works; and Charles Dickens is another instance of the ungrudging readiness with which the palm is yielded to that genius which can excite the admiration and waken the sympathies of all. Literary history presents few examples of a career, hitherto so brief, marked with such signal success; but what was suddenly acquired has been well maintained and presents every right of continuance. "Todgers's Boarding House" in the last number of *Martin Chuzzlewit* is equal to any of the pictures that gave such universal celebrity to the *Pickwick Papers*. The history of a writer is the history of his works, and in the present case they extend over so small a space of him, considering the effect they have produced, that our sketch must be very brief. His first efforts, we believe, were the *Sketches by Boz*, which contain passages equal to anything he has ever produced, though they were not collected from the stray and fugitive channels in which they first appeared till the *Pickwick* had given "Boz" an English reputation that has since become European. To *Pickwick* succeeded *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, and *Master Humphrey's Clock*, in which he departed from the plan of monthly publications, and brought out a number weekly. His return to the former plan may be taken as a proof that the weekly appearance did not answer. It was certainly objectionable, the quality of the work was not inferior, but the portions given were too small; there was always enough to provoke, and never sufficient to satisfy. It was like drinking champagne with a tea-spoon. On the winding up of the *Clock*, Boz took a year's rest, and in the interval took a trip to America, where he was fêted and caressed with a fervour scarcely to be expected from so "calculating" a people. Could they have anticipated some of the "Notes" he was about to put in "general circulation," their ardour might have been somewhat abated. Opinions were more divided on his book-work it can hardly be called on America then on anything he has yet produced. As a whole it is defective, though there are many happy sketches of character in it. Boz is not only an Englishman but a Londoner, and the eye that is keen enough in the street becomes dim in the vastness of the prairie and the cataract; it is no fault of Boz's that Bevis Marks and Niagara will task two very different classes of faculties to describe adequately.

He is now bringing out his *Martin Chuzzlewit*, which is progressing well; that "boy" at "Todgers's" is quite a gem in his way. We have omitted one or two works he has only "edited," not written; his name is on the title-page, to carry down a bookseller's speculation, but they are altogether unworthy of him. The trick is now so well known that the public can hardly be taken in by it again. The popularity of Dickens as an author is something remarkable; his works have been translated into every language of Europe. Some of Sam Weller's similes have put the French translators to sore shifts and expedients, but the Germans have managed pretty well. We have met with *Pickwick* in low Dutch on the banks of a canal in Rotterdam, and found *Master Humphrey's Clock* in high German in the heart of Switzerland. Business once called us to the *comptoir* of a German tradesman in the vicinity of Heidelberg, and on the desk beside the ledger was a well-read translation of *Nickolas Nickleby*. We were curious to see what part it had interested the man of trade,

and (had the fighting students of the university tinctured the "philister" with some of their own combativeness ?) he was absorbed in the description of the death of Lord Verisopht in the duel with Sir Mulberry Hawk ; no discredit, we thought, to his taste, for it is one of the most vivid and impressive passages in the work. Who will deny that Charles Dickens is a popular author ? In addition to his talent as a writer, Boz is an agreeable speaker, and his addresses, whether from the chair as a president or in returning thanks for a toast, have always something pleasing in their turn of thought, or expression, or the illustrations he introduces. The effort is greatly assisted by the possession of a good voice, which, though rather thick, is strong and well-modulated.

From "The Illustrated London News," April 8th, 1843.

PLAYS IN *MASTER HUMPHREY'S CLOCK*

BY MALCOLM MORLEY

I

THE first number of the weekly publication *Master Humphrey's Clock* came out on April 4th, 1840. Less than two months later a two-act drama with the same title* was performed at the Victoria Theatre, later known as The Old Vic. Frederick Fox Cooper wrote the piece, which claimed to be founded on the first story in the Dickens work.

What a claim ! In the stage drama, Joe Toddyhigh, so named from a character in the publication, delivers a Prologue and then disappears. The gist of his matter, spoken in rhymed couplets, is that where Boz provides a head the theatre furnishes a tale. After Joe has gone the play proper begins, a play where the spirit of Dickens is nowhere present and where not even a distorted echo of his writing reaches the stage.

In Fox Cooper's extraordinary melodrama, produced on Friday, May 29th, of that year, it is hard to find any connection between the dramatist's characters and those in the early pages of the *Master Humphrey's Clock* of Boz. There is no Hugh Graham, no Jack Redburn ; but there is an Alice in the play as against the Mistress Alice in the weekly publication.

Presumably, then, the mention of the first story has reference to *The Old Curiosity Shop*, Chapter I of which appeared early in the issues of *Master Humphrey's Clock*, followed by a wait of three numbers before the next instalment. It is possible that Cooper had only seen the first issue of the story when he concocted his play. What little he knew of the Dickens serial is blatantly apparent in the drama given at the Victoria.

A murkiness pervades the characters put upon the stage. The deformed Master Humphrey, with his clock ticking in the background, is an uncertain figure with some kind of obscure mission in life. Hargrave Hartley, the unknown, is weighed down by a secret sorrow whilst Alice, the tenant of the Lone House, is an enigmatic person whose identity remains concealed until near the end. Dyke of the Ferry has a clearer purpose in the play, being simply a reprobate and cutpurse. His object is to abduct or destroy Elinor, described as a child of mystery.

Elinor is a shade of a shade of Little Nell in *The Old Curiosity Shop*. She lives with Simon Tradelove, a feeble old antiquary presumed to be her father. Unlike Nell, she has a gallant ever in attendance, one Gilbert Gray, bold, dashing and determined. In the antiquary's

* See illustration, p. 168.

employ is Christopher Curious, a fat and comic apprentice serving in the Curiosity Shop after the manner of Kit Nubbles. He adores Little Elinor and when the dastardly Dyke invades the girl's bedroom intent upon "burying his trusty steel in her heart's blood," the lad is there to protect her. He had crept into a suit of armour and taken his stand in the room. To all appearance Christopher is an inanimate piece of mail until the time comes for him to save her life.

Both Dyke and Hartley are killed in the last scene, each having a lengthy dying speech in commiseration of their crimes. It is revealed that Elinor is the long-lost daughter of Alice, surnamed Evringham, and the niece of Hartley who wanted the girl out of the way. Her rights are proclaimed by the waiting Master Humphrey as, with an accompanying chord of music from the band, he produces papers and deeds from an old trunk to prove everything.

What of the players in this balderdashery hung on a Dickens peg? They were not all without reputation in their day. First and foremost was N. T. Hicks, the gallant Gilbert Gray. Hicks was known as "Bravo" Hicks from the plaudits he won from the audience. After an expressive gesture, big and broad, the actor would hold his head high, fix his eye upon some distant gallery, assume a picturesque stance and wait for the "Bravoes." N. T. Hicks was ever a two-penny-coloured hero. Tom Manders, seen as Christopher Curious, was a balloon of a man, a Cockney wit and well versed in the parlance of the byways of London. For some years he presided over the social activities of the Sun Inn in Long Acre as landlord of that convivial establishment. John Courtney, who played Dyke of the Ferry, was himself a much better playwright than Fox Cooper. His comedy "Time Tries All," produced a few years later at the Olympic, proved a success of a higher and better standard than that of transpontine melodrama. Dale, a powerful character actor, was seen as Hargrave Hartley; Mrs. Howard was little Elinor, and Miss Cooke pumped emotion into the lonely tenant, Alice. "Laddie, what a cast!" as the old-time professionals were wont to say.

II

The chapters of *The Old Curiosity Shop* advanced weekly. When the serial was well in stride, though long before the tale was told, the first stage version was brought out. It would be radically wrong to accept the Cooper concoction as any kind of an adaptation whatever background he may have furnished for his play from a few early paragraphs of the story. To Edward Stirling, who had manufactured a stage version of every full-length story by Dickens to date, is credited then the first dramatisation of the serial. It was given under the Yates-Gladstane management at the Adelphi on Monday, November 9th, 1840, as *The Old Curiosity Shop; or, One Hour from Humphrey's Clock*, a burletta in two acts. There were thirteen scenes and, in these, the pictures published with the story were reproduced on the stage, the playbill quoting the original text for each. The play progressed, as it were, from one illustration to the next.

The first scene introduced Master Humphrey full of good advice which he was giving to Little Nell. There followed her wanderings with her grandfather, their meeting with the itinerant showmen, the old man's passion for gambling and the persecution of Nell by the dwarf, Quilp. In the final scene Little Nell was made to live happily ever afterwards. Such anticipation of her fate by the dramatist is said to have annoyed Dickens so much that, having still several more chapters of the work to write, he reversed the Stirling pronouncement and killed the poor girl off.

Due pathos was alotted to the heroine by Mrs. Keeley, while Frederick Yates revelled in the contortions of Quilp and Edward Wright spouted the amiabilities of Dick Swiveller in a fine and flowery fashion. Paul Bedford and George Weiland were well fitted to Tom Codlin and Short Trotters, and the dodderings of the Old Grandfather took Tom Lyon away from his usual line of parts, juvenile and heavy. Other principal parts were taken by J. P. Wilkinson as Kit, J. Cullenford as Garland, Giffen as Mr. Brass and Miss Lee as Mrs. Quilp. Incidental music was composed by G. H. Rodwell.

No more dramatisations of the novel, contemporary with its first appearance in print, are recorded. "The Old Curiosity Shop" when next seen on the stage in Central London was at Drury Lane on October 4th, 1853, for a single performance, the occasion of Samuel Emery's Benefit. The adapter was not mentioned but almost certainly the piece must have been the same work by Stirling, perhaps with a certain amount of revision. He was engaged at the time at Drury Lane as stage manager for E. T. Smith, the new lessee of the theatre and in that capacity could well have provided the script for that performance. Incidentally, Emery was the Quilp, George Honey the Dick Swiveller, and Ellen Turner the Little Nell. A glut of "Little Nell" and "Old Curiosity Shop" plays were to come later and for years the subject was as popular on the stage as any born of Dickens.

While *The Old Curiosity Shop* was running its course in *Master Humphrey's Clock*, it shared the pages of the publication for a short period with a re-introduced Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller. These two worthies figured in an incident which took shape as a one-act farce, "Mr. Weller's Watch," at the Strand Theatre on August 10th, 1840. This is the piece mentioned in a recent article in *The Dickensian*, "Mr. Pickwick Makes his Debut."

III

Barnaby Rudge was another novel by Boz that initially appeared as a serial in *Master Humphrey's Clock*. It was the work with which that weekly ended. But before being ended, Barnaby, like his predecessors, was in action in the theatre. On June 28th, 1841, a Commonwealth of actors at the English Opera House (The Lyceum) staged the first dramatisation. *Barnaby Rudge* was taken from the published chapters by Charles Selby and Charles Melville, the latter an ancestor of the brothers, Fred and Walter, managers and melodramatists. In its stilted way it was a workmanlike mystery drama. The mystery of Reuben Haredale's death is propounded soon after the curtain is up and the solution retarded to a few minutes before the final curtain falls. The solemn Stranger who has been trailing through the three acts is revealed as the murderer—Richard Rudge. The Gordon Riots have no place in the drama, but there are several scenes at the Maypole Inn with the Vardens, the Willets and the self-important Simon Tappertit in full play. A prominent character is the demented Barnaby. Idiot Boys were something of a rage in the Minor theatres of those days. Favourite plays were *The Idiot Witness, The Idiot of Heidelberg* and others similarly named.

The cast at the English Opera House included Selby (the part-adapter) as Mr. Chester, Turnour as John Willett, T. Green as Joe Willet, Searle as Simon Tappertit, Thompson as Solomon Daisy, Granby as Gabriel Varden, S. Smith as Hugh, and F. Salter as the dark and cryptic Stranger. Among the ladies were Miss Granby as Miss Haredale, Mrs. Harris as Miggs, Mrs. Selby as Mrs. Rudge, Miss Fitzjames as Dolly Varden, and Miss Fortescue as Barnaby Rudge. The last mentioned gave a performance that impressed Macready, who

wrote in his famous diary, "I went to the English Opera House and saw a piece on *Barnaby Rudge*; Miss Fortescue acting the part with great vivacity and power."

Geoffrey Haredale was taken by a Mr. Robson. The point has been raised as to whether this was an early effort of the great Frederick Robson. It is hardly likely considering that Robson would be only twenty at the time and working by day as a master engraver. In the evenings he was paying for parts as an amateur actor at the Great Catherine Street Theatre, a house where the stage-struck had to buy their way to footlight fame. Boz has written of such a Private Theatre in one of his *Sketches*.

The next stage showing was at the Strand (where Henry Hall was now manager) on the following August 9th, the adapter being Edward Stirling again. It was called *Barnaby Rudge; or The Riots of London in* 1780, and although the Gordon demonstrations figured in the play it made no great appeal to the public.

About this time appeared "Barnaby Rudge; or The Murder at the Warren," by Thomas H. Higgie. There is some doubt as to where his version was produced. Fitzgerald suggests the Strand or the Surrey. This does not appear probable from the list of players given, among whom were Mrs. Traylett as Barnaby, Tilbury as Gabriel Varden, H. T. Craven as Maypole Hugh, W. H. Widdicomb as Simon Tappertit, Rogers as Solomon Daisy, Chamberlain as the Stranger, Mrs. R. M. Raymond as Dolly Varden and Higgie, himself, as Mr. Chester. None of them were attached to either playhouse at that date though Tilbury and Rogers were to be together at the Strand ten years later when Widdicomb was first low comedian at the Surrey. It is possible that the Higgie play was given at the Queen's where managements were irregular and various new groupings of actors sought to attract playgoers at intervals between closures. Or it might have been at the City of London where Higgie was acting himself during part of the year 1841.

Yet another dramatisation named *Barnaby Rudge* was staged on December 20th, 1841, at the Adelphi. The novel by this time had been issued in its entirety and George Herbert Rodwell, the adapter, had the advantage of reference to the completed work. Rodwell was the musical conductor at the Adelphi, also a composer, dramatist and novelist.

The production was criticised as wanting in consecutiveness and there was an amount of disapproval at the end of the performance. Shouts of "No" mingled with others "Bravo, Yates." Barnaby, as in previous dramatisations, was played by a young woman, in this case Ellen Chaplin. Dolly Varden fell to the exhuberant Eliza Terrey, Gabriel Varden to the portly Paul Bedford, and the murderer Rudge to T. Lyon. John Willett went to Wilkinson, Maypole Hugh to O. Smith and, inevitably, Simon Tappertit to the antic-minded Edward Wright. Mrs. Yates was seen as the sorrowful Mrs. Rudge, while her husband, Manager Yates, undertook two contrasted parts, Sir John Chester and Miss Miggs. After a few performances he resigned them both, the first to Cullenford and the second to Miss Chester.

Year by year new adaptations were brought on the stage. When not *Barnaby Rudge* they were generally *Dolly Varden*. Some were plays without and some with music, even to the extent of being comic operas. Taking all in all, the contents of *Master Humphrey's Clock* were to be liberally bestrewed upon the English-speaking theatre.

NOTES TO *OUR MUTUAL FRIEND*

By T. W. Hill

continued from page 149.

BOOK III.

Chapter VII

1. ALL'S WELL. A very popular duet a hundred years ago; words by T. Dibdin, music by J. Braham. This time Wegg has only two slips, the second line should read:

"When skies proclaim night's cheerless gloom."

2. A SHILLING TO LOOK UP THAT WILL. The same fee is still charged for the inspection of a will at Somerset House, but if a copy of any part is desired, the fee is 3*s*. 6*d*.

3. HAND WHICH NEVER YET . . . reminiscence of melodrama, "A hand which never yet was sullied or did an unworthy action, etc."

4. HOME, SWEET HOME. Written by J. Howard Payne, and with music by Sir H. R. Bishop, introduced into his opera "Clari" (1823). This was performed under Dickens's direction at private theatricals in 1833, when the family lived in Bentinck Street, London.

What an unconscionable vandal Wegg was! Read his version and then see how he has maltreated the beautiful original second verse:

"An exile from home splendour dazzles in vain;
Oh, give me my lowly thatched cottage again,
The birds singing sweetly that came at my call.
Give me them with the peace of mind dearer than all.
Home, sweet home,
There's no place like home."

Chapter VIII

1. BY GOD'S HELP, SO YOU MUST. In the Church Catechism, the Catechumen is asked, with reference to the promises made at Baptism by the Godparents, "Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe and to do as they have promised for thee?" and replies, "Yea, verily, and by God's help so I will."

2. DEADNESS THAT STEALS OVER ME. This seems to be due to some physiological change consequent on old age after a life of hard work. Betty must have been over seventy, as she told John Harmon she was "old enough to be his grandfather twice over."

3. STIFF AND NUMBED. See previous note.

4. WHITE LION. Almost certainly the Red Lion Hotel at Hampton, where the sign does hang "across the road," and the "old gray church" is close by. See *Dickensian Inns and Taverns*, by B. W. Matz, 1922.

5. PAPER MILL. Marsh Mill, near Henley may have been in Dickens's mind when he found a situation for Lizzie, but there is a slight discrepancy between its actual site and that given in the book.

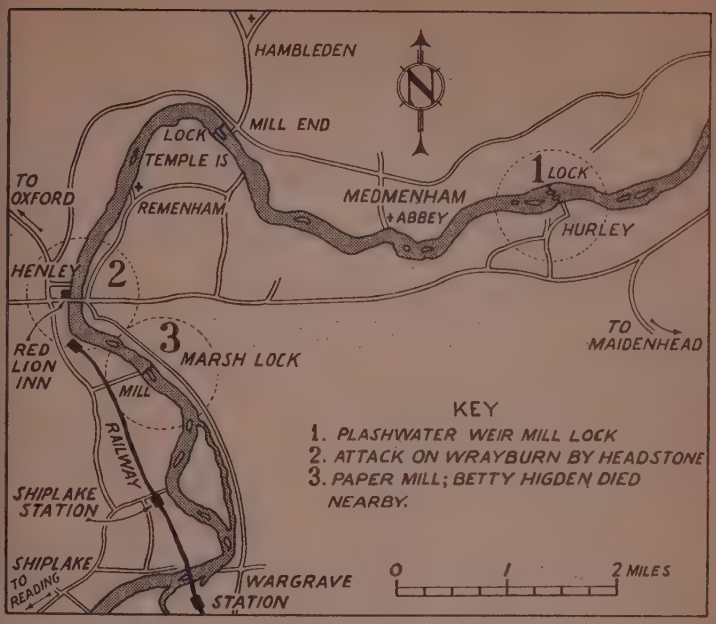
Chapter IX

1. TRAGIC MUSE . . . IN MAJESTIC CORNERS. Included in the decoration of the proscenium of most theatres are to be found the masks of the two Greek Muses, Melpomene, the Muse of Tragedy on one side and Thalia, the Muse of Comedy on the other.

2. BORDERS OF OXFORDSHIRE. The sketch map that accompanies these notes will show how closely Dickens must have studied this part of the country before writing the story. Names of places are omitted by Dickens or disguised.

3. RAILWAY. The Great Western Railway, although not named, because Dickens is using fictitious names for the places hereabout.

4. SHUT A GREEN EYE. This arrangement is not in accordance with modern signalling practice, but is correct for the period about which Dickens was writing. See *The Dickensian*, 1943, p. 206, and a letter from T. S. Lascelles in *The Dickensian*, 1944, p. 51.



Henley and District to illustrate *Our Mutual Friend*

Specially drawn for *The Dickensian* by C. W. Richardson.

Chapter X

1. SHARPER THAN A SERPENT'S TOOTH. A quaint conceit, quite in keeping with Jenny's care for Mr. Dolls, her "bad child."

> "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
> To have a thankless child."
>
> "King Lear," Act I, Scene 4.

2. PASTILES. Small lozenges of aromatic paste used for fumigation now largely superseded by sprays of some disinfectant.

3. PATIENCE ON A MANTEL PIECE. Adapted for the occasion from "Twelfth Night," Act II, Scene 4:

> "She sat like patience on a monument,
> Smiling at grief."

4. BEING GONE YOU ARE A MAN AGAIN. The allusion is of course to the disappearance of Banquo's ghost at Macbeth's banquet:

> "Hence, horrible shadow,
> Unreal mockery hence. Why so, being gone,
> I am a man again."
>
> (Act III, Scene 4.)

5. HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL. A quotation from Pope's *Essay on Man*.

> "Hope springs eternal in the human breast."

6. HEY HO, CHIVEY. Part of the refrain of "Old Towler," words by John O'Keefe, music by W. Shield:

"Bright chanticleer proclaims the dawn
And spangles deck the morn . . .
With a Heigh ho, Chivey !
Hark forward, hark forward, tantivvy, etc."

7. HUNTING EVENING. Eugene here quotes another hunting song, with an amendment :

"A southerly wind and a cloudy sky
Proclaim it a hunting morning
Before the sun rises we nimbly fly
Dull sleep and a downy bed scorning."

CHAPTER XI

1. FIVE AND TWENTY MILE AND ODD. The distance by road from Hyde Park Corner, where Headstone parted from Riderhood, is just over thirty miles, by the river it is fifty-nine miles, from London Bridge.

2. LINE'S BREADTH. One of the sayings for an infinitesimal measurement, (the other is a hair's-breadth). Euclid defines a line as having length but not breadth or thickness ; as a measure a line is one-twelfth of an inch.

CHAPTER XII

1. BEG MONEY, BORROW MONEY, OR STEAL MONEY. The saying, "beg borrow, or steal" is old enough to have been used by Philip Massinger (1584-1640) ;

"This neither begging, borrowing, nor robbery,
Yet it hath a twang of all of them."

"The Guardian," Act V, Scene 4.

CHAPTER XIII

1. YOU WERE THE MASTER. Jenny had not forgotten that in the garden on the roof Riah had said : "This is my master . . . explain to the master, Jenny." (Book I, Chapter V).

2. CONFESS JUDGMENT. This term, now practically obsolete, was used in actions to recover possession of property, and also in County Court actions to recover debts ; it shortened considerably the legal proceedings. It has now been superseded by a process called "Admission of the Plaintiff's Claim.'

CHAPTER XIV

1. I WISH YOU TO SEE IT. An amusing Weggism founded on Ben Jonson's song :

"Drink to me only with thine eyes
And I will pledge with mine."

2. GIVE HIM AN INCH. Mr. Wegg was using an adage at least four centuries old. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) uses it in *Liberty and Necessity*, "Give an inch, he'll take an ell" ; an ell, really 45 inches, was proverbially an elastic term for an indefinite but considerable length.

3. WHEN THE HEART OF MAN. From the "Beggar's Opera," by John Gay (1728). The only alteration Wegg has made is to substitute "Venus" for "a woman."

4. WALK IN THE SAME. Another adaptation from the Church Catechism, where this phrase occurs : "I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life."

CHAPTER XV

1. BAG AND BAGGAGE. That is, all one's belongings. The phrase seems originally to have been a military one, applied to the defenders of a fortified position, having honourably surrendered and then allowed to evacuate it with their bags (knapsacks) and all other baggage. Shakespeare uses it in the same connection. Touchstone : "Let us make an honourable retreat, though not with bag and baggage, yet with scrip and scrippage." ("As You Like It", Act III, Scene 2.) It will also be found in Scott's *The Antiquary* (ch. XI) : "Here comes old Edie, bag and baggage, I think."

Chapter XVI

1. SEE WHAT O'CLOCK IT WAS. When clocks were taxed in 1797 ordinary folk could not afford them, but public houses installed special clocks (with white figures on a black ground) and an excuse for refreshment became a wish to "see what o'clock it is."

2. WALK TO HOLLOWAY. From Mincing Lane it is about four miles, say one hour's walk. Rumpty did not reach home till ten o'clock as the little party had stayed in the Veneering office till nine o'clock.

3. KEEPING-ROOM. An old-fashioned name for the general sitting or living room of the family.

Chapter XVII

1. SLIPPERY LITTLE HORSEHAIR BOLSTERS. The sofa of the period was covered with horsehair, black, shiny, hard and slippery, and often made additionally uncomfortable by having little ends of horsehair sticking out like needles and quite as sharp. The accompanying bolster partook of all those attributes. The sofa on which Dickens died, preserved at his birthplace at Portsmouth, is of this description.

2. RAW BEEFSTEAKS. Navvies (short for navigators) were brawny labourers, many of them Irishmen, employed in the construction of canals inland navigation; a rough living crowd who had the reputation of keeping up their strength by the consumption of huge quantities of beef and beer.

BOOK IV.

Chapter I

1. WAGERBUT. W. J. Roffey in *The Dickensian*, 1926, p. 261, says a wagerbut is a boat used for rowing for a wager—a racing or best boat, but it is suggested by the Count de Suzannet that wagerbut is a corruption of "water-boatman," the common name of a little water insect (*notonecta*) about two thirds of an inch long, the hind legs of which are fringed with hair and prolonged; when the insect rests on the surface of the water it has a strong resemblance to a sculler resting on his oars.

2. CHEEK. The cheek covers the jaw, so the slang use of "cheek" or "jaw" for impertinent talk is easily explained.

3. DAGGER THAT SLEW WAT TYLER. This refers to the little dagger in the dexter chief (first quarter) of the City of London Coat of Arms, placed on the posts to shew that the towing path is the property of the City Corporation. The tradition that the dagger commemorates the death of the rebel Wat Tyler in the rising of 1381, when he was slain by the Lord Mayor William Walworth, has really no foundation as the dagger antedates the Peasants' Revolt. It actually symbolises St. Paul, the patron saint of London.

4. CAN'T BE DROWNED. The tradition cited by Riderhood is very old but, as his own end proved, is quite untrue.

Chapter II

1. COME TO BREAKFAST. Invitations to breakfast were quite the fashion in the early 19th century; those of Samuel Rogers, the banker-poet, are part of literary history. The writer remembers breakfast parties given by the first Lord Avebury and Sir Mountstewart Grant-Duff in the 1890's. Nine o'clock was the usual hour. If the party were only a social one it broke up about 10 or 10-30; if it were for business or professional chat it might last all the morning.

2. SELF-PRAISE IS NO RECOMMENDATION. A sentiment that is mentioned by Plutarch, "Self-praise and self-depreciation are alike absurd" (*Life of Cato*); George Herbert (1593-1635) gives it a modern tone, "He that praiseth himself spattereth himself" (*Jacula Prudentium*); and William Cobbett (1762-1835) presents it almost as we know it, "In general it is a good rule that self-praise is no commendation."

3. JEWELLER'S COTTON. What we now call cotton-wool.

Chapter III

1. FIVE O'CLOCK DINNER. The fashionable dinner-hour. Dickens's letters contain many invitations to dinner at 5 o'clock or 5-30 p.m.

2. COME TO THE BOWER. See how ingeniously Wegg reversed the original sense of the words of this song, by Thomas Moore, who actually wrote :

> "Will you come to the bower I've shaded for you ?
> Our bed shall be roses all spangled with dew."

3. ALONG THE LINE THE SIGNAL RAN. From "The death of Nelson," words by S. J. Arnold, music by John Braham.

CHAPTER IV

1. ONE MORNING EARLY. What a strenuous day Bella faced on her wedding morning. She was up before 4 a.m. to prepare breakfast for Pa, then saw him off about 4-30, then walked in the garden for an hour or more, say till 5-30 or 6 o'clock, kissed Lavvy goodbye and walked at least three miles to catch the early steamboat for Greenwich, where she was received by John, then walked to Blackheath to a second breakfast in John's cottage, then went for a charming ride and a charming stroll. Then came the marriage dinner and finally the leave-taking of Pa on the returning steamboat at sunset, which would be nearly eight o'clock in July (see note 4) before walking back home with John to his Blackheath cottage.

2. OLD VALENTINES. The cherub in this valentine can be compared with "the decidedly indelicate young gentleman" in the valentine sent by Sam Weller to Mary in the *Pickwick Papers*. Valentines with their scented padding and lace-paper borders went out of fashion with the 19th century.

3. SPITEFUL FAIRY. A reference, of course, to the fairy tale of the Sleeping Beauty by Charles Perrault (1628-1703).

4. HEATH IN BLOOM. The time of year would be July or August.

5. GOLDEN BLOOM. This indicates that gorse as well as heather flourished at Greenwich.

6. THE VERY HOTEL. See note 1 to chapter VIII of Book II.

7. WHITEBAIT. Dickens had to give the happy couple this fish, as Greenwich was associated with the Ministerial Whitebait Dinners held yearly at Greenwich during part of the 19th century.

8. YOUNG MAN ON LIKING. On liking was the usual colloquialism for on trial or probation. One gathers that he was not altogether happy in his job.

9. OH, 'TIS LOVE, 'TIS LOVE. A theme common to many ballads, serious as well as comic, of the music halls in their heyday.

CHAPTER V

1. RAILROAD. The railway to Greenwich was opened in 1836 and the Great Western Railway by which Bella and Mr. Rokesmith returned from Betty's funeral (Book III, chapter VIII) in 1835, so we are afforded a slight hint as to the date of the story ; let us say Dickens's favourite period of the forties.

2. COMPLETE BRITISH HOUSEWIFE. The British Museum has a copy of *The British Housewife*, published in 1790 ; and also *The British Housekeeper*, 1843. Bella's *vade mecum* might be one of these books as they contain many cookery recipes and hints on household management.

CHAPTER VI

1. FOURTEEN OF THEMSELVES TO THE PINT. Nuts, as well as many kinds of grain, such as oats, peas, lentils, etc., used to be sold by "dry measure," by the pint, quart, peck, etc., the larger measures being of wood. Fourteen Barcelona nuts would certainly seem short measure in the pewter pint pot, but it is what one might expect at a fair.

2. HILLY STREET. New Street, Henley answers to this description.

3. INN LAWN. The Red Lion is probably referred to, although Dickens avoids the actual mention of any name ; there is a "patch of lawn sloping gently to the river." Robert Allbutt, in *Rambles in Dickens Land*, (1899), has a careful chapter on the whole of the Lock district. See also Dexter's *England of Dickens* (1925).

CHAPTER VII

1. MEANT TO IT AND FORGOT TO IT. See note 2 to chapter III, Book I.

CHAPTER VIII

1. PERSIAN GOWN. In Book III, Chapter I, Fledgebys apparel is described

as "Turkish slippers, rose-coloured Turkish trousers and a gown and cap to correspond." In this chapter he is still wearing a pair of Turkish trousers and a Turkish cap, but the gown is Persian and he changes the Turkish cap for a Persian: evidently he had an assortment of Eastern garments. (Unless, indeed, Dickens has slipped).

Chapter IX

1. YOU KNOW WHAT A PUMPKIN IS. This keeps up the playful illusion of Riah and Jenny being in the story of Cinderella.

Chapter X

1. IF SHE HAS SEEN THE CHILDREN . . . SMELT THE FLOWERS. How effectively Eugene, in his returning consciousness, recalls Jenny's "pleasant fancies" in Chapter II of Book II.

Chapter XI

1. LITTLE DRESDEN CLOCK. A mantel or bracket clock in the form of a Dresden China female figure in voluminous skirts, among the folds of which is the gilded face of the clock. Dickens was fond of the little Dresden China Shepherdesses and compared Mrs. Rouncewell in *Bleak House* and Mrs. Crisparkle in *Edwin Drood* with these charming ornaments.

2. DIGGING PITFALLS. Digging a pit is used in the Bible, particularly in the Psalms, in its figurative sense of setting a trap for the unwary. Shakespeare also makes use of the expression:

> "Poor bird, thou'dst never fear the net, nor lime,
> The pitfall, nor the gin."
>
> "Macbeth," Act IV, Scene 2.

Chapter XII

1. PICKFORDS. This great name, recognised as symbolic of efficient transport, represents three hundred years of public service. In the reign of King Charles I, Thomas Pickford owned teams of pack-horses for goods traffic; pack-horse bridges still survive at several places. Pickford's pack-horses were superseded about 1675 by Pickford's stage-waggons, great conveyances with tilts and immensely broad wheels, carrying each seven or eight tons of goods; the Pickford of the period was James; later came Martha Pickford and then Matthew Pickford, with "flying waggons" in 1771, doing the journey from London to Manchester in four-and-a-half days, with passengers as well as goods. Shortly afterwards the firm, ever progressive, made use of barges on the canals that were so widely being constructed; one of their principal depots, the City Road Basin, is still in active service. When railways came into general use in the nineteenth century, Pickfords became their forwarding agents, and nowadays, though Pickfords has become the property of the four great railway companies, the firm retains its own organisation. This note is kindly supplied by Mr. Charles Bostock, the secretary of the company:

Chapter XIII

1. MANDARIN. At one time, among the ornaments with which the Victorians embellished their homes it was not uncommon to see a small Chinese Mandarin (of yellow glazed china) with a movable head that nodded vigorously at a touch.

Chapter XIV

1. LAST WAGGON LOAD. It has taken a year to clear away all the mounds.

2. FANTAIL HAT. A leather flap attached to the back of the hat by a strap and protecting the shoulders of the wearer when carrying heavy burdens such as sacks of coal, etc., it resembled in appearance a sailor's "sou-wester."

3. DEMON OF UNREST. Insomnia due to worry or nervous tension or similar causes.

4. COBBLER'S PUNCH. Punch as the name for a drink is a Hindu word *punch* meaning five, as there should be five ingredients: wine, water, lemon, sugar and spice. In Cobbler's Punch the principal ingredient is, as hinted at by Venus, gin instead of wine, so Cobbler's Punch is a facetious name for sweetened gin and water with a slice of lemon.

Chapter XV

1. I'LL POUND IT. The same as I'll wager. (Slang). Another instance of its use by Dickens is in *Oliver Twist*: "I'll pound it you han't." (Chapter XXXIX).

2. ROSE EARLY. Dickens endows his characters with his own exhaustless energy. Attention has been drawn above to Bella's strenuous wedding-day Now Headstone rises about 5 o'clock, "it was not yet light," for he was on the road "two hours" before the "tardy day" began (at 8 o'clock) and he had probably reached Knightsbridge. Then he "outwalked the short day" till 4 o'clock and "was on the towing path . . . still two or three miles short of the Lock," say about two miles beyond Maidenhead. The total distance from Hurley (Plashwater Mill Weir Lock) to Deptford (where Kent and Surrey meet) is over thirty miles which is not very much more than Riderhood's "twenty-five mile and odd" in Book III, Chapter XI.

Chapter XVI

1. MIGHT, COULD, WOULD OR SHOULD. Dickens is never tired of conjugating the verb to be as in Lindley-Murray's grammar.

2. TREPANNED INTO AN INDUSTRIOUS HUNT. Trepan has two meanings: (a) to perforate or penetrate a bone with a surgical saw, a trepan (French *trépan*; (b) formerly trapan, to cheat, ensnare, from old French *trappan*.

3. BACKBOARD. A board about three or four feet long and one foot wide, placed across the shoulders and held in position by the arms to induce an upright posture. Little used in modern times and superseded by calisthenics and physical exercises.

4. BROUGHT UP A YOUNG GAZELLE. An allusion to Moore's one popular ballad, "The Fireworshippers":

> "I never nursed a young gazelle
> To glad me with its soft black eye,
> But when it came to know me well,
> And love me, it was sure to die."

5. HEALTHFUL MUSIC OF MY PULSE. The full sentence in Shakespeare runs:

> "My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
> And makes as healthful music."
>
> (Hamlet, Act III, Scene 4.)

Chapter the Last

1. THE VOICE OF SOCIETY. This chapter shows Dickens's power of satire at its highest pitch and well repays careful reading and study: it will be noted that after several pages of the most biting commentary on society gossip, bringing out the meanness of each of the *dramatis personae*, the book ends with the masterly touch of a general snubbing of all of them administered by the gentle amiable Twemlow. Truly great writing.

2. CHILTERN HUNDREDS. In accordance with our unwritten Constitution, a member of Parliament cannot resign his seat unless disqualified or by acceptance of an office of honour and profit under the Crown. The Stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds is such an office and so, by a fiction, an M.P. who wishes to resign accepts the office (which, formerly an important appointment, is now a pure sinecure) and immediately resigns it. Other offices of similar tenure are available if more than one M.P. resigns at the same time.

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THE indulgence of subscribers who have been awaiting bound volumes of *The Dickensian* for 1946 is requested. The work has been in the hands of our customary binders since January, but has now been returned to us untouched with the intimation that neither this nor any further work can be undertaken for us, through lack of labour. A new firm has now to be sought and a fresh start made.—EDITOR.

TWO CITIES, A TALE OF . . . I.

By T. W. HILL

MRS. BACON has done it again. It is a far, far . . . But that seems the wrong beginning. Start afresh.

Mrs. Bacon has shewn great skill and rare judgment in her adaptation of the essentials of the plot of *A Tale of Two Cities*, presented on May 16th at the Victoria Hall, Bloomsbury Square. In a series of nine well-managed scenes, from the stoppage of the mail-coach on Shooters Hill to the climax on the steps of the guillotine, it was impossible to shew every incident, but those parts of the story not reproduced were ingeniously woven into the dialogue of the characters who did appear so that hardly a detail was lost and the story ran smoothly without a break; a masterly piece of compression that must have meant months of study and application. If by any chance the members of the large and enthusiastic audience had not read the book—an impossible suggestion—the whole book was there; if they had read it—as of course they had—the story was fully realized visually for them.

Critics are of two kinds: there are those who endeavour to find fault, and those who look for matters deserving commendation. I am one of the latter; how could I be otherwise when the entire cast, no less than twenty-six, involving some necessary doublings, shewed so patently their anxiety loyally and painstakingly to work as a united team to carry out Mrs. Bacon's intentions. The gratifying result was that the performance went without a hitch from start to finish. Anyway, I came not to scoff, and I remained to praise.

The five principal rôles were in capable hands. Brenda Beagley's reading of the part of Lucie Manette commanded the immediate sympathy of the audience from her first anxious meeting with Jarvis Lorry at Dover to her agonizing parting with her husband on his final arrest in Paris, and it must be said that Miss Beagley drew a nice distinction between her portrayal of the seventeen-year-old girl in the first scene and the mature and dignified lady of thirty-seven when she parted with Darnay.

H. Charles as Jarvis Lorry had a difficult task to keep up his supposed devotion to "business," and one felt constantly that he would have liked to become sentimental but dare not let his feelings go. He and Gertrude Heaton as Miss Pross—an ideal and most convincing nurse—played up to one another well.

The Jerry Cruncher of J. Greaves was a masterpiece of characterization, and Mrs. Bacon in her adaptation had managed to give him much more to do on the stage than he appears to have in the book; his behaviour to his master Jarvis Lorry was one of the high lights, comedy though it be, of an entirely admirable performance. (But I did miss his "spiky hair.")

The part of Doctor Manette was taken by H. C. Sanders. As the poor, cobbling creature rescued, or released, from the Bastille, he was a moving picture.

Percy Merriman added to his laurels by his impersonation of Sydney Carton. His early career as a hard drinker was acted with consummate restraint while giving a convincing picture of his own heedless ways combined with a charming deference to Lucie, and at the end his

sympathetic, brotherly, almost fatherly, treatment of the poor seamstress, simply and charmingly played by Ruth Whittaker, moved every one in the audience. Percy Merriman can add his Sydney Carton to his signal success as Scrooge last Christmastide.

Of the remainder of the long cast the Defarge of A. E. Regan was outstanding as a fine, manly performance of divided loyalties: his evident loyalty to his former master, Doctor Manette, and his marital loyalty to his overbearing wife, played by Vera Harris, who, well as she carried out her sinister part, did not strike me as sufficiently conspiratorial, although I must say that her appearance at the tribunal was very effective. Of Elsa Beringer as The Vengenace I would have liked to see more; her sense of the dramatic had not scope enough. Charles Darnay was the plaything of destiny and that is exactly what G. Frost made him. He gave the impression that it is useless to fight against fate, and his mistrust of the tricks of Carton the night before his execution was very well done. As the three Jacques, F. Howland, R. Webb and C. Young fitted their parts admirably, but a thirsty onlooker could only envy their moderation. By the way there wasn't really much to drink for I did not see any wine in front of Madame Defarge; it must have been "under the counter" and there must have been a black market during the French Revolution.

The juvenile parts of Little Lucie and Young Jerry were entrusted to two young people who had responded well to their instructions. Diana Skinner gave quite unaffectedly a pretty presentation of the behaviour of a little girl living in her own home and not acting upon a stage; G. Regan was good as a boy pestering his father with questions.

I must not omit to mention the walking-on parts; the gaolers, doubled from other parts and entailing commendably "quick-changes"; and the Aristocrats in the Conciergerie, played by Doris Danby (a great granddaughter of Dickens), Nell Letley, M. Todd and D. Greaves. And this leads naturally to a mention of the excellent costumes provided for them by the Dickens Fellowship Costume Department and Ruth Whittaker. I found from the programme that Mrs. Creek was specially thanked for her assistance in this Department, but I did not see the name of Miss Minards who superintends this most useful adjunct of Headquarters.

The mounting of the play was of the simplest; no back cloth other than draped curtains but just sufficient properties on the stage to give the necessary realism. All these properties were the work of our accomplished J. Greaves: screens, bank railings, counters, jury box, prisoner's dock and book-cases, and especially, as Mrs. General might say, book-cases. What matter if they were mostly battens, canvas and paper? The skill was there and if paper, painted, looks like polished panelled oak, it *is* polished panelled oak, so here's more power to your elbow, Mr. Greaves.

At the close the whole cast crowded on to the stage to receive the well-deserved "curtain" and Mrs. Bacon stepped to the front to accept several tributes of flowers. With characteristic modesty she gracefully handed on the loud and long applause to her loyal troupe of collaborators. Among those called for was the Stage Manager, Edith Blanthorn, who would not, however, shew herself "because she was so dirty"—that's a woman all over. Her work had, no doubt, been arduous, but so much of the smooth running of the play had been due to her that I am sure the audience would have been delighted to see her, dirt and all, in order to give her "a big hand." Here it is.

FROM RECENT BOOKS

By LOUIS B. FREWER, M.A.
(Bodleian Library)

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

"Judged by modern standards, the human population of Cincinnati in the 1830's lived much like pigs in the streets. Dickens admired the city's 'clean houses of red and white, its well-paved roads, and footways of bright tile'. But those red and white facades were placarded with ineffectual no-nuisance signs, the bright tile footways were foul with tobacco juice. . . .

"Despite its dearth of ready cash, it was a booming Cincinnati that entered the century's fifth decade, with 46,000 inhabitants and almost as many more in the surrounding Hamilton County. Dickens, a year later, found the city 'cheerful, thriving, and animated. I have not often seen a place that commends itself so favourably and pleasantly to the stranger at first glance.'

". . . she sent presentation copies of the novel [*Uncle Tom's Cabin*] and wrote letters to some of the leading men of the British Isles. She wrote to the Duke of Argyle and to the Earls of Carlisle and Shaftesbury, philanthropists interested in the cuase of human liberty everywhere. She wrote to Dickens, Macaulay, and Charles Kingsley, liberals whose sympathies were with the underprivileged.

"Dickens reviewed *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in *Household Words*,[*] calling it 'noble but defective' . . . Lord Denman, the former Lord Chief Justice, published an elaborate analysis . . . answering the *Times* strictures and even reproving Charles Dickens for suggesting that the Stowe kettle was black.

"Jewett was getting out an edition in German for immigrants. Robert Everett, editor of *Cenhadwr*, was publishing it ('with the consent of Mrs. Stowe') in Welsh 'for 100,000 Welsh emigrants in this country.' (Even Dickens never attained a Welsh translation).

"Meanwhile a certain English enterprise had been causing agitation all that winter on both sides of the ocean. Like many American women who read *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, thousands of the book's British women-readers also wanted 'to *do* something.' Unlike their American sisters, who merely wrote impotent letters to the *Era* and *Independent*, the British converts *did* something. A group of them, including Queen Victoria's friend, the Duchess of Sutherland, the Duchess of Bedford, the Duchess of Argyll, the Countess of Shaftesbury, the Lord Mayor's lady, Viscountess Palmerston, Mrs. Milman, Mrs. Tennyson, Mrs. Dickens, and a score of other ladies as conspicuous in the social, philanthropic and literary worlds of England, met at Stafford House, the Duke of Sutherland's palatial London residence, and drew up 'An Affectionate and Christian Address of Many Thousands of Women of Great Britain and Ireland to Their Sisters, the Women of the United States of America.'

"Hearing . . . that the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* would arrive in London on the date of the Lord Mayor's annual dinner to the judiciary of England . . . the Lord Mayor could not resist bagging the lioness . . . and gave it out that the judiciary dinner of 1853 would have an international literary cast. As England's literary representative he invited Charles Dickens. At the dinner Harriet sat above the salt and opposite Mr. Dickens, who was perhaps not exactly relishing his position. He would have accepted it, however, if only to score on his friend Thackeray, who was pouring scorn on the Stowe dementia and especially upon the 'Affectionate and Christian Address . . .' Mr. Justice Talfourd . . . proposed 'Anglo-Saxon Literature.' The learned judge alluded to two distinguished authors then present. The one was a lady who has shed a lustre on the literature of America, and whose works were deeply engraved on every English heart. The other was, of course, Mr. Charles Dickens, to whose works the learned judge paid an eloquent tribute.

"In replying, Dickens uttered the most restrained praise of herself and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* Harriet was to hear publicly expressed in the course of her entire British visit. Mr. Dickens observed that, in returning thanks for the toast, he could not forget he was in the presence of a stranger who was

* In collaboration with Henry Morley. Sept. 18, 1852—Editor.

the authoress of a noble book, with a noble purpose. He really should not call her a stranger, for she would find a welcome in every English home. And Dickens turned humorously to his troubles with a lawsuit amid the maze of British legal technicalities.

"After the dinner Harriet had a few moments of what she called pleasant friendly conversation with the novelist and his wife, and later Mr. and Mrs. Dickens drove down to Walworth to call on her. But Dickens's friendship was not one of the enduring ones Harriet brought from her London visit. —"Crusader in Crinoline," by Forrest Wilson. (Lippincott.)

* * * * *

THIS ENGLAND

"Dick Turpin and other highwaymen have thrown a doubtful glamour around some hundreds of public houses, and Dickens immortalised inns in all parts of the country.

"All England is Dickensland, but no district is more intimately connected with the novelist and his works than the county of Kent. He spent his early and most impressionable years at Chatham; he ended his life at Gad's Hill Place, near Rochester.

"Many Kentish towns and villages appear in Dickens's works, but none more frequently than Rochester. It is given its own name in *Pickwick Papers*, *David Copperfield*, and *The Seven Poor Travellers*. It is thinly disguised as Dullborough in *The Uncommercial Traveller*, and Mudfog in *Sketches by Boz*. It is the Market Town of *Great Expectations* and the Cloisterham of *Edwin Drood*. No city can be more easily peopled with the folk of the novelist's creation. We can stay with the Pickwickians at the 'Bull Hotel,' for the old hostelry is much the same to-day as it was when Dickens was alive. The wide, rambling staircase is still there, the coffee-room where Mr. Winkle was challenged to a duel, the ballroom with its 'crimson covered benches,' the window from which Mr. Pickwick saw the odd contrivance which was to convey his party to Dingley Dell, and bedroom No. 17 in which the immortal Pickwick slept. The ghosts of Jasper and Durdles still haunt the shadowed aisles of the little cathedral, and surely the grim figure of Miss Haversham hides somewhere in Restoration House!

"Lovers of Dickens will remember the 'Leather Bottle' at Cobham. Successive landlords have turned the inn into a veritable Dickens museum. It was to the 'Leather Bottle' that Mr. Tracy Tupman returned after the loss of Rachel Wardle, and was found by Pickwick, Winkle and Snodgrass doing full justice to an ample repast.

"Broadstairs was Dickens's favourite holiday resort, and many of his books were partly written there. The marsh village of Cooling has been identified with the place where Joe Gargery had his forge, and where Pip met the convict Magwich. Canterbury figures in the pages of *David Copperfield*. The 'little inn' where Mr. Micawber entertained David is the 'Sun,' the 'County Inn' where Mr. Dick put up is supposed to have been the 'Fountain,' and 71 St. Dunstan Street is pointed out as the residence of Mr. Wickfield. Dickens knew and loved many counties and many parts of England, but Kent was the county to which he gave his heart.

"Among the historic schools of this country should be included two which can hardly be said to have existed. The first was the subject of an advertisement in the *Gentlemen's Magazine* in 1735, which read: 'At Edial, near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek languages by Samuel Johnson.' Only three pupils came to the school and one of them was a little boy named David Garrick. The other school was at 4 Gower Street, London, where the mother of Charles Dickens put up a board advertising 'Mrs. Dickens' establishment. School for girls.' But the girls were not attracted and the experiment landed Charles's father in a debtors' prison.

"Danes might like to remember that Hans Andersen once came to London where he stayed with Charles Dickens at Tavistock House. The site is now occupied by the headquarters of the British Medical Association."—"This is England," by F. Cowles. (Muller.)

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"Charles Dickens—as Gilbert Chesterton has pointed out, and as we ought to have seen without the aid of Chesterton—so painted the life of the very poor as to fill it with a certain golden fascination. He so portrayed tragedy that somehow it ceased to be sordid tragedy and became magnificent tragedy. He always found laughter, and he often found song, where dull observers have found only meaningless boredom at best and insufferable brutality at the worst. There is quite likely to be an outburst of music just when you would expect a dirge. The Isaiah of the Exile has none of Charles Dickens's rollicking delight in life. But he does have Dickens's sense of a song in the midst of tragedy. And he does shout with triumph at the most surprising times.

"The great literary artist has a sense for the human crisis. Victor Hugo could not possibly miss the night of battle when Jean Valjean contends for his soul or the hour when he appears at the court where an innocent man is about to be condemned and says, 'I am Jean Valjean.' Nathaniel Hawthorne could not possibly miss the scarlet letter burned upon Dimmesdale's breast. Charles Dickens could not possibly miss Sydney Carton's going to the guillotine to save a friend for a good life in England.

"When you think of the novel as the sword of the apostle of social indignation, probably if you are a Frenchman the name of Zola comes to your mind at once, and if you are an Englishman you think of Charles Dickens.

"The apostle of social indignation is really a lawyer with a brief. He tells the truth. But he does not tell them all the truth. He tells the particular truth which is relevant to his winning of his case. Social wrongs of a concrete type had a way of going down before the pungent pen of Charles Dickens. He could pronounce the sentence of death upon a social institution with a single book. It was his happy secret to tell the story of the wrongs of the poor and the under-privileged in such a fashion as to leave them with their human dignity intact. Life was always in some way good to Dickens even under the most sordid circumstances. So you had at least the suggestion of a song in your heart as you tried to make it better."—"The Meaning of Human Experience," by L. H. Hough. (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York.)

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"Who *was* George Eliot, the author of *Scenes of Clerical Life* ? . . . John Blackwood, the publisher, did not know the truth. Thackeray was wholly received.

"Charles Dickens alone put his finger on the clue to the mystery. He wrote in the letter I held in my hand :

"'Will you—by such roundabout ways and methods as may present themselves—convey this note of thanks to the author of *Scenes of Clerical Life* ; whose two first stories I can never say enough of, I think them so truly admirable. But if those two volumes, or part of them, were not written by a woman, then I should begin to believe that I am a woman myself.'

"That letter . . . was addressed to Mr. Joseph Langford, of Blackwood's, one of the very few who knew the truth about her.

"The ballyhooing of Miss Winsor and her book [*Forever Amber*] is now shocking a new generation of readers. People are saying that it is a dreadful thing that authors should exploit their personalities, and that American publishers should resort to circus methods in pushing the sale of their books. Dreadful or not, it is certainly not new.

"No modern author has made as many 'personal appearances' as Charles Dickens, who delighted in showing himself to audiences.

"'Charles Dickens was particularly incapable of excluding disorder from his works, owing to the life he led. He wrote too much and in too great haste, because he also loved life and everything that it offers apart from work.

"'The work of Dickens is like a zebra, made up of stripes of the false and the true, but let us say also that his zebra is alive, astonishingly alive. It was impossible for Charles Dickens to present a personage without breathing life into him. His pages are crammed with people who are real creatures, creatures of flesh and blood, made up of those qualities which God himself put into us and our fellows.

"'Monica Dickens resembles her ancestor tremendously. She writes too

much, in too great haste, and the attractions which life offers distract her from her work. . . .' This is the judgment of the experienced and shrewd observer, Rebecca West."—"Drifts my Boat," by J. W. Drawbell. (Hutchinson.)

* * * * *

"When speaking of the mercy of God, he used an unusual and striking illustration. He recalled the tragic story of 'Little Emily' in *David Copperfield*, picturing with feeling David's friendship for the humble fisherfolk living in the old wreck on the beach at Yarmouth, and the agony of mind of the big, kind-hearted fisherman when he found his little niece betrayed and stolen from him. Father Sullivan described Dan Peggotty's heartbroken search and his injunction to his sister that the little door of their humble house was always to be left on the latch so that if the child, in her misery, should return, she should at once find admittance. Then at last came the happy day when uncle and niece were reunited. 'If such could be the love and forgiveness of an earthly relative,' said Father Sullivan, 'what must be the love and mercy of God for the poor sinner who goes astray and for whom He laid down His life?' When telling this story of Little Emily and her uncle, Father Sullivan quoted long passages of Dickens's narrative."—"Father John Sullivan, S.J.", by F. McGrath. (Longmans.)

* * * * *

"The sketches collected in Mrs. Gaskell's *Cranford* were quickly recognised as literature. They have now the secondary value of period pieces; through them we can enter the small-town life of the early years of the century, and be as familiar in it as in our own world. They appeared in Dickens's *Household Words* about the middle of the century, but most of them, in matter and spirit, look back to the twenties and thirties.

". . . whether as attorney's apprentice or solicitor's clerk you find him in the old dramatists, in Fielding and Smollett, in the early Dickens, and wherever you find him to-day you find him as they drew him. He worked ten hours a day at copying, and was paid about threepence an hour. His recreations were those of Lowten, Guppy, Wemmick, Swiveller, and the rest of the fraternity. His only prospect was of rising to managing clerk. If he achieved that, he was for the rest of his life a fixture of the office. Once in his profession he never changed it."—"The English Townsman," by Thomas Burke. (Batsford.)

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"Thus it often happens that a great work of art is also very powerful propaganda. Novels of Dickens like *Nicholas Nickleby* and *Great Expectations* are both great art and at the same time social documents of great propaganda value."—"Education and Crisis," by B. A. Fletcher. (Univ. of London Press.)

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"The humanitarian movement itself represents the conflux of many separate streams. There was, for example, the tremendous influence exerted by Rousseau, the real author of the doctrine of the forgotten man and the forgotten masses. His influence was quite as great in literature as in politics. It helped create the novel of the common man in England in the eighteenth century, a literary influence that found such vivid expression in the nineteenth century in the novels of Dickens."—"Problems of Men," by J. Dewey. (Philosophical Library, New York.)

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From My Library Walls, by William Dana Orcutt (Murray) contains a chapter entitled "Through Kent with Charles Dickens."

* * * * *

The Road Goes On, a literary and historical account of the Highways, Byways, and Bridges of Great Britain, by C. W. Scott-Giles (Epworth Press) contains several illustrative passages from Dickens: "Suspicion" (*A Tale of Two Cities*) illustrating the Dover Mail; "Travels of a Newspaper Reporter" (*Forster's Life*); "Snow on the Road" (*Nicholas Nickleby*); "Mr. Pickwick on Travelling," "Mr. Weller, Senior, on Turnpike Keepers," and "Decline of the Turnpike" (*Uncommercial Traveller*).

"Charles Dickens . . . found Cincinnati one of the few places in America to his liking.

"As late as 1842, Charles Dickens reported that the city was a system of 'spacious avenues that begin in nothing and lead nowhere; streets a mile long that only want houses, roads and inhabitants; public buildings that need but a public to be complete. . . . One might fancy the season over, and most of the houses gone out of town with their masters.' What's more, he thought it would stay that way."—"Cities of America," by G. S. Perry. (McGraw-Hill.)

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"This interest in character for its own sake has grown in modern times. The novel, which depends less on plot than the drama does, has helped to cultivate a taste for striking personalities. Thus we remember characters in Dickens like Mr. Micawber or the Fat Boy long after we have forgotten what happened to them. A great many readers have learned to like such characters so much that they care, or profess to care, very little for the story proper."—"The Anatomy of Drama," by A. R. Thompson. (Univ. of California Press.)

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"The fantasy self, whether moral or immoral, is bogus; and the attempt to express it imaginatively leads to strain, with the resultant artificial effect. We see this in the case of Dickens, who, in spite of his many virtues, was far more like his bad and eccentric than his good characters—which explains why his bad and eccentric characters ring true, while the virtuous creations of his fantasy self are unconvincing.

"In my opinion, Hudson's work in the sphere of fiction was best suited to the short story form. There are writers, such as Tolstoy and Dickens, who express themselves best in the long and involved story and who think in terms of plots that carry the weight of such length. Hudson, on the other hand, seemed to think in terms of plots that are essentially terse, vivid and compelling; and this, while it obliged him to spin out unduly the material of the longer novels, made for success in the short story.

"The majority of Dickens's characters are drawn from his childhood experiences—so also are many of the characters Hudson created in the Romances and re-created in the Essays and Autobiography."—"W. H. Hudson, the Vision of Earth," by R. Hamilton. (Dent.)

* * * * *

"The stream has dried up. We have no writer to-day within a million miles of Dickens. We have no authors, no thinkers, no painters of the calibre of the great Victorians.

"I use the word 'artist' in its widest significance. Many of them are superior to what Bacon called 'the wisdom of business.' Bacon himself did not follow his own counsel. Nevertheless, many great men—Shakespeare, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Zeuxis, Apelles, Rubens, Reynolds, Turner, Titian, Dickens, to name but a few—combined practical sagacity with their genius.

"The latest writers about Dickens have discovered that the great genius had a 'criminal strain' in him."—"Must England Fall?" By H. Bennett. (Allen and Unwin.)

* * * * *

"Fagin tried in vain to convert Oliver Twist into a thief. This is called in Chinese, 'Going through the mud without a stain.' That is why Kwan Yin, Goddess of Mercy, the highest Buddhist Goddess in Chinese mythology, is represented sitting on a lotus, which is a plant that grows in the mud . . . but rising high above it.

"The very saying that 'When parents are living, a man should not promise his life to his friends (as a pure sacrifice outside the scope of duty)' shows that such cases have been not infrequent. It may appear that this idea of friendship is exaggerated. But has not Sydney Carton willingly gone to the guillotine to save Charles Darnay? It is true that this is only *A Tale of Two Cities*, but life, we know, is sometimes even stranger than fiction and nobler things have been accomplished by man than what the novelist has ever yet been able to create by his pen."—"China moulded by Confucius," by Cheng Tien-Hsi. (Stevens.)

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

Branch Reports of not more than 200 words are invited for inclusion on this page.

Resuming his tour of last March, the Editor is to address the following Branches on the Dickens House: Gloucester, Oct. 8th; Cirencester, Oct. 9th; Cheltenham, Oct. 10th; Bath, Oct. 13th; Plymouth, Oct. 20th; and Nottingham, Nov. 15th. Visits to other branches are in course of arrangement.

BALHAM

This branch, the membership of which is about 50, flourishes under the able leadership of the President, Mr. E. J. Fullwood, and the Hon. Secretary, Miss Jane Davies. Lectures, readings and acted scenes have been contributed by the members and by visitors from other branches. Alternating with the usual monthly meetings, outings and rambles have been much enjoyed. Places of literary interest visited include the Dickens, Carlyle and Keats houses, and of general interest were visits to the Physic Garden, Chelsea, the Hall of the Apothecaries' Society, the Geffrye Museum, and a ramble to Strand-on-the-Green and Chiswick.

BATH

The Bath Branch, after well over a quarter of a century's existence, is still "going strong" and brought a highly successful season to a close on May 12th, when the Annual Meeting was held and Mrs. H. B. Dawes relinquished office as President, a position which she has held with tact and dignity during the year. She is succeeded by Mr. F. W. G. Thomas, who for many years past has given valuable service to the Branch, a gentleman of considerable literary ability who has contributed various papers on Dickensian subjects.

Miss D. Green, the Honorary Secretary, read her report detailing the work of the Society during the past session. This was highly satisfactory; the attendance, despite the frequent inclemency of the weather, had been excellent. Miss Green made reference to the passing of Mr. H. Palmer Jones, the Immediate Past President, a veteran member who had been a constant supporter in the Branch's activities.

The main work during the past season has been the reading of Dickens's tragic novel *A Tale of Two Cities*, relieved by several lighter interludes.

Mr. F. Mills arranged an excellent performance of "Bardell *v.* Pickwick," admirably staged and dressed, which was repeated on two subsequent occasions before other Societies.

Our Life President, Alderman T. Sturge Cotterell, also read a paper on that much discussed era, "The Victorian Age," an intensely interesting paper.

F. C. D.

RUGBY

Owing to the death of our highly esteemed President, E. L. D. Cole, Esq., M.A. (who for many years was a Classics Master at Rugby School and had been our President since 1938), Mrs. June Tatham was elected President.

The book of the year gave us plenty of opportunity for dramatic sketches and study, resulting in splendid efforts at the various well-attended meetings. These meetings included the President's Evening, Members' Night, "Gentlemen entertain Ladies" Night, and the Dramatic Night and Dance.

Whist Drives and Socials were very popular and the collections were devoted again to the Merchant Seamen and Hospital of St. Cross.

The Birthday Dinner at the Dun Cow, Dunchurch, was very enjoyable, in spite of the terrible weather, for we were privileged to have our President and Chairman with us in a real Dickensian atmosphere, round a real bowl of punch. Mr. Leslie C. Staples was the chief guest.

At our Annual General Meeting, Mr. F. J. Hudson was elected to the Chair. He was for thirteen years our Hon. Secretary, during which period the Rugby Branch flourished, and we all hope to see many of the pre-war activities return under his direction, with renewed visits to and from Redditch, which have lapsed during recent years.

A. E. L.

ST. PANCRAS

The Annual General Meeting was held on April 19th when officers and committee were elected for the coming year under the Presidency of Mrs.

Jane Bacon. The Branch has had a very successful year and meetings were well attended despite the trying weather. The show of toys and dolls in Christmas week was an attractive feature and the distribution brought much joy to the sick children who would otherwise have had a disappointing Yuletide. Money collected was expended on boots and clothing, although the provision of clothing coupons presented considerable difficulty. Our finances are satisfactory and donations were made to the Friends of the Dickens House, the Friends of Southwark Cathedral, and the Children's Hospital of Gt. Ormond Street. This latter, for which Dickens himself pleaded so eloquently, has been assisted as much as possible by the St. Pancras Branch for the past twenty years.

The Hatfield Branch joined us at St. Albans in July on a happy visit to the city. Membership is increasing and subscriptions to *The Dickensian* grow steadily. Constant correspondence with the Vancouver Branch is maintained.

A. N.

Congratulations and good wishes to the following newly-elected Hon. Secretaries:

Mr. A. E. Leeson, of Rugby, Mr. W. Haydon, of Auckland, New Zealand, and Miss I. Hutchinson, of Blackpool.

The thanks of the Fellowship as a whole are cordially tendered to the retiring Secretaries, Mr. Frank Lucking, Miss F. Robinson and Mrs. Shaw respectively. And also to Mrs. M. Cole of Bromley whose place has not yet been filled.

OBITUARY

MAY BOVINGDON

It is with deep regret that the loss of Miss Bovingdon is recorded. On June 15th the end came as a release from a long illness which had entailed intense suffering borne with great bravery. A gentle, sincere and lovable friend, we shall sadly miss her at many a meeting for, notwithstanding that she lived at Chatham, there was no more constant attendant at St. Pancras Branch meetings. Her kindly thought and welcome for everyone and her keen knowledge and love of Dickens endeared her to us all. Miss Bovingdon was President of the Branch in 1935-6 and again in 1940-1, and was Treasurer for many years. She also took an active part in the meetings at Headquarters and of the Rochester Branch. Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to her niece and many friends.

A. N.

BERNARD GILPIN COUNSELL

Members of the Blackburn Branch will, in future, sadly miss the presence among them of Mr. Counsell. No one was more highly esteemed among them and by his death the Branch loses one of its keenest supporters.

L. M.

WILLIAM HENRY LOWRY

By his death in hospital on July 24th, after a short illness, London members will be deprived of the knowledge, services and fellowship of Mr. W. H. Lowry. All were freely at the disposal of his fellow-members for twenty-seven years, during which time he long served on the Committee and conducted a great many rambles through the London that he knew so well, the last occasion during the Conference in May, as reported on another page. Mr. Lowry devoted a great part of his time during the recent war to conducting overseas soldiers around literary and historic London.

L. C. S.

ROBERT HENRY PLASCOTT

The death has occurred at Southbourne of Mr. R. H. Plascott, who will be well remembered as actor and producer on the Southampton amateur stage for over 30 years. Mr. Plascott was producer of the Southampton Dickens Players for over 20 years, and was one of the founder members of the original Southampton Amateur Dramatic Society. He had tact and patience as a producer, and his personality endeared him to all who knew him.

E. H.

DICKENSIANA

Great Expectations. With an Introduction by Bernard Shaw. "The Novel Library." Hamish Hamilton, 6s.

A Tale of Two Cities. Adapted by G. A. Benscoter and M. L. Howe. College Entrance Book Co., New York.

* * * * *

"The Dickens Collection" (in the Parrish Library). Gordon Hall Gerould. *Princeton University Library Chronicle,* November, 1946.

"Carlyle's Influence upon the Social Theory of Dickens," Part II. Mildred G. Christian. *The Trollopian,* June.

"The Immortal of Doughty Street." Frederick Sinclair. *St. Pancras Journal,* June.

"Dickens in his Characters." Robert Hamilton. *The Nineteenth Century,* July.

"Biography and Criticism." Hugh Kingsmill. *New English Review,* July.

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Five Shillings.—Anon., "Caleb," Mr. P. Merriman, Mrs. Entwistle, Miss Bateson and Miss Heyes, Mrs. Whalley, Mrs. Wilding, of the Blackburn Branch.
Four Shillings.—Mrs. A. M. Marsh (Rochester).
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A Journal of Victorian Fiction

Edited by Bradford A. Booth

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